GROWING UP IN AN EGYPTIAN VILLAGE 000

Silwa, Province of Aswan

by

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Foreword

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In writing a foreword to Dr. H. M. Ammar's study of growing up in an Egyptian village, I am expressing in particular terms the general satisfaction which every university teacher feels when a field of research which he has been advocating for some time, is adopted, investigated and made the subject of an original study. Dr. Ammar's book was the result of an intensive period of field work in Egypt, preceded by systematic study in London where he formulated his theories, argued his premises in seminars, and examined the main approaches to his problems. He has done me the honour of referring to several of my published papers, and it is clear from these references and from the way in which he has handled his topic, that his research was directed towards the almost unexplored field of the social and psychological aspects of the training of children in a village community. The village of Silwa which he chose for his study was a community which in its social structure and economic life was, to a large extent, homogeneous. Though it was relatively isolated geographically, it was not unaffected by social change, and an important section of Dr. Ammar's book deals with the impact of a modern system of schooling on the outlook and activities of the villagers.

The publication of this study marks a second stage in the contribution of the University of London Institute of Education to this important field. In 1940, Dr. Otto Raum, also a former post-graduate student at the Institute, published his *Chaga Childhood*, the first full-scale study of indigenous tribal education undertaken at a British university. Dr. Raum's book was the first landmark in a new approach to the study of what had formerly been called 'Primitive Education'. In this book he related the process of training Chaga children in their own environment to the nature and activities of Chaga tribal institutions, and relied on the teaching and field work of social anthropologists, chiefly those of the functional school, for his theoretical guidance.

The focus of interest of scholars in this field, up to the publication of Dr. Raum's book in 1940, was in societies which were then designated as 'primitive'. Subsequent field studies, between 1940 and 1953, were almost exclusively confined to tribal societies, where the culture was enshrined in institutions, distinctive to, and dominant in, a particular tribe, and hence

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114 limited to that tribal group and tribal area. The notable exceptions to the limitation to tribal societies were the American field studies in Indian communities in North, Central, and South America, and in Negro communities in the southern states. Only one piece of research, and that hardly an intensive village study, had been undertaken in the cultural areas dominated by the Islamic tradition, and none in the cultural areas of the Far East and South-East Asia.

Dr. Ammar's book is therefore a landmark in two respects. He has carried out research in child training in a village community dominated by the Islamic cultural pattern, and has established the validity of these studies in a society which shows many contrasts with tribal societies. He has also demonstrated an original line of research. His dominant interest lay in the problems of personality and culture. In his exploratory research he ranged widely in the modern anthropological studies of culture, and also in the inter-disciplinary approach to the study of personality. In his theoretical examination of his problems, and in the organization and analysis of his field work, he has brought together the contributions of social anthropologists and of psychologists, both British and American. In his capacity as a trained educationist he has focused these contributions on the dual aspect of education of the children in Silwa village, in its traditional and modern forms. It is this correlation of the study of traditional child training, in its setting of the village culture of Upper Egypt, with the examination of the impact of modern schooling on that village culture, which distinguishes Dr. Ammar's contribution to the progress of research in this field.

There have been relatively few intensive and localized studies of the part played by modern education in social change in Western Europe. There have been fewer still in tropical areas, and in those parts of the Middle and Far East where the form and content and methods of modern schooling have been to a large extent exported from Western Europe, or at least have received their initial impetus and imprint from that source. Dr. Ammar has also accepted the challenge of the need for research in this second unexplored field, which is necessarily correlated with the problems of cultural continuity in societies where a traditional form of social and economic life still persists. There is often a time-lag between the introduction of educational reforms and their full implementation, due to the reluctance to accept reforms by those elements in the population which regard imposed cultural changes of any kind as a threat to their security. Here Dr. Ammar has indicated further lines of research which are significant in all plans for educational advance.

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February, 1954.

Preface

THE VILLAGE SETTING

SILWA, the village community chosen for this study, is an Egyptian 101
village in the province of Aswan, the southern border province in 131
Upper Egypt.[1] It lies at a distance of about 850 kilometres from
Cairo and approximately 80 kilometres to the north of the town of Aswan
itself. With a population of nearly 3,500, Silwa is an administrative head- 161
quarters with a Police Centre responsible for ten villages, five of which, 631
including Silwa itself, are officially referred to as Northern Silwa (Silwa
Bahari), while the other five are called Southern Silwa (Silwa Kibli).

The total area of this administrative unit covers more than 17 square 131
kilometres along the eastern bank of the Nile, with a total population of 161
more than 11,000. The density of population in these villages is about 700
persons per square kilometre, whereas it is slightly less than 600 for the
whole country.[2] The sex distribution in the village of Northern Silwa, 162
according to the official statistics of 1947, shows almost even number of
males and females, a distribution which is similar to that in the whole
country. The table overleaf shows the relation between age distribution
in Silwa Bahari and that of the whole country.

Significant in the table is the fact that the figures in Silwa follow
pretty closely the national figures, and that slightly less than 40 per cent
of the total population both in Silwa and in the country as a whole are
less than 14 years old, a population trend characteristic of peasant so-
cieties.[3] It cannot be ascertained how the malaria epidemic which spread [164]
in Silwa and in all parts of the province of Aswan between 1942 and 1945
has affected the percentages of age distribution in Silwa and might partly
account for the slight discrepancies shown in the table.

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[1] At present Egypt is divided into sixteen administrative provinces.

[2] *Census of Popul[illegible] of the Kingdom of Egypt for 1947*, Vol. I, pamphlet 1—The Province of Aswan, G[illegible] Press, 1951 (Arabic). The General Census for the whole country from 1947 had no[illegible] published during the writer's stay in Egypt (1951) and he had to work out figures for the whole country from the previous General Census of 1937, taking into account the increase of population from 17,000,000 in 1937 to 19,000,000 in 1947.

[3] Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlan Restudied*, University of Illinois Press, 1951, p. 30.

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TABLE I

162 Comparison of age-group distribution of Silwa Bahari and Egypt as a whole.[1]

Age group	*Percentage of Total Population*	
	Silwa	*Egypt*
under 5	15·0	13·3
5–9	11·9	13·9
10–14	11·2	12·0
15–19	11·1	8·5
20–29	14·5	15·2
30–39	13·9	14·6
40–49	10·5	10·1
50–59	6·1	5·9
60 and over	5·7	6·3
unidentified ages	0·2	0·2

361 Like many other villages in Upper Egypt, Silwa lies at the foot of the
Eastern Plateau. This physical setting divides the villagers' world in Silwa
into three distinct parts: the 'hills', the villages, and the fields. The barren
[823] 'hills', with their rugged dark rocks, though a source of fear and apprehen-
sion to the children, are not so inhospitable for the adults who rely on the
[241] salty clay (nitrous soil) found in these hills for use as land fertilizer. The
[134] village itself is composed of compact houses built of sandstone, which is
[342] available in the environment. There is hardly any planning in the village
scheme, except for three main streets cutting across the village from east
363 to west and another main street leading from north to south; the first three
forming the main routes from the village to the fields. The rest of the by-
ways between the houses are narrow and twisted and are occasionally
interrupted by heaps of stones and rubble. After 1936, owing to the increase
362 of village population, a new space between the old village and the railway
line was allotted free by the government for building purposes. Most of
this space has been built upon and inhabited mainly by those married sons
whose parental homes have not sufficient room for their accommodation.
361 However, the finest buildings in the village are the two mosques. With
[346] whitewashed walls, elegant and dignified minarets, and a floor covered
[182] with mats, these mosques represent one of the most cohesive forces in the
life of the villagers—religion.

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[1] Here the percentages in Silwa are worked out from the figures given for 1947, but those of Egypt from the figures of 1937. Thus one could assume that the percentages of age groups have not radically changed. On the other hand, there are no details about age groups in Silwa in the 1937 Census.

life of the villagers—religion. Next to the mosques in appearance and 660 361 cleanliness are some of the shops and stores. These must have a minimum 349 standard of building requirements, according to official regulations. On the north side of the village stand the police station the post office and the 656 elementary school. As to the fields, they extend to the west of the railway 344 road up to the Nile bank, where the water-pumping works, established in 346 1932, stands with its modern buildings and garden and electric light. 496

It is worth mentioning here that each of the ten villages constituting the 312 administrative unit of Silwa has its own name and is separated from its neighbours, however close these may be, by a recognized boundary, e.g. a 631 high mound, a valley, or a stretch of gravel or sand. Each of these villages (or two villages combined, as in the case of four of the villages) has its mosque and village saint tomb with a cemetery attached to it. In spite of the fact that all the villages attached to Silwa trace their origin to one ancestor, as will be discussed later, their spatial separation is associated with sub-divisions in their kinship relations.

The physical characteristics of the inhabitants of these villages show a 144 considerable degree of homogeneity. With their dark skins and long heads, they seem to conform to the ancient Southern Egyptian type.[1] All the inhabitants of Silwa, however, take great pride in describing themselves as 829 descendants of Arab stock related to the Prophet. They refer to their traditions and customs and even their dress as 'Arabian'. Whether their claim is true or not, the belief is of central importance as one of the cohesive forces in the village community, and it is the means by which the villagers, 182 especially the older generation, distinguish their way of life from that of others.[2]

The rhythm of daily life in Silwa hardly varies. The crack of dawn wit- 512 nesses the muazzin calling for morning prayers; youths and men, mounted on their donkeys or camels, call on each other to climb the hills to fetch the fertilizer. By sunrise, most men and boys are heading towards the fields with their cattle and tools; and by broad daylight the village seems

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[1] A. Batrawi, who has studied the physical anthropology of Egyptians, maintains that there is some justification for the usual division of Egypt into Upper and Lower Regions as far as the cephalic index is concerned. The people of Upper Egypt have longer but narrower heads, and longer fingers, feet and forearms than those of Lower Egypt. His study of the living samples of modern Egyptian population from all over Egypt suggests that they conform more closely to the Ancient Southern type. Moreover, the distribution of blood groups in present-day Egypt shows that the mass of the population is very homogeneous and there are no significant differences in this respect between the Moslems and the Copts. 'The Racial History of Egypt, Part II—Relationships of the Ancient and Modern Population of Egypt and Nubia', in *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXXVI, 1946, pp. 131–35.

[2] Arab genealogies must be accepted with great caution. The notion of the Arabs as a conquering race, known for their gallantry, honour and power, played effectively on the minds of the indigenous stock of the fellaheen, who showed an earnest desire to be considered members of that race. Many fellaheen have succeeded in linking themselves to an Arab tribe. A. Ammar, *The People of Sharqiya* (Ph.D. thesis, Manchester University), pp. 13–21.

THE VILLAGE SETTING

512 almost deserted, except for women going on visits or on business and young children noisily engaged in their games. By sunset the roads leading to the village become busy and crowded with villagers and cattle returning home, who in their hurried endeavour to get their evening meal raise the dense cloud of dust that characterizes the agricultural roads and the village streets during this hour. Some time later, the village witnesses the general exodus of women and girls from the village towards the Nile to fill their water jars, while the men sprawl outside the houses or cluster round a wood-fire in the guest house on cold nights to exchange news, smoke their tobacco and engage in gossip.

369 121 101 In portraying some of the features of the rustic setting and life in Silwa, a question emerges: to what extent is this village under study typical of the rural conditions in Egypt? To such a question an objective answer is almost impossible, considering the fact that there are five thousand large villages and twenty thousand hamlets (izbahs) in Egypt. The writer can only claim with confidence that Silwa is typical of the majority of villages in the province of Aswan. There are certainly differences from one province to another, with regard to the degree of urbanization, the infiltration of agencies of social change such as schools, means of communication, newspapers and radio. On the whole, Aswan, being the farthest province from the metropolis, could be considered relatively the least affected by such factors. It is also known as one of the poorest provinces, as the Nile Valley reaches its narrowest stretch in the south (with the exception of the district of Kom Ombo). Moreover, Silwa, as will be seen later, is composed mainly of small landowners. There are many other villages throughout Egypt where the inhabitants are mainly tenants or part-owners and part-tenants, while many others work as hired labour.[1] With the exception of Kom Ombo, the majority of the land in Aswan produces subsistence crops, while in other provinces cash crops such as cotton and sugar-cane may be the main agricultural crop.

562 184 At this juncture it is important to point out one of the striking differences between most of the provinces of Upper Egypt down to Beni Suef and the other provinces, especially in the Delta. This is while women in the former provinces go about veiled and do not actually work on the fields, those in the latter are neither veiled nor debarred from active work on the farm. The writer cannot satisfactorily account for such a difference and knows of no source that has tackled this question. Is it merely a result of some historical or racial difference between the two parts of the country? Has it some connection with cotton culture and the perennial irrigation which are mainly predominant in the North?[2] Is it an expression of some

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[1] See A. Ammar, op. cit.

[2] The cultivation of cotton requires not only a dense population, but one with a birth rate above the average. Charles Issawi, *Egypt—An Economic and Social Analysis*, London, 1947. In the light of this, female labour was perhaps essential for the economic activities in those provinces.

major cultural variation between these regions? Or is it a combination of these factors? At present the writer finds himself unable to settle such an issue. 562 184

In conclusion, it is extremely difficult to show the extent to which Silwa is a typical Egyptian village. All that can be claimed is that Silwa at least represents one of the village types prevailing in Upper Egypt. It also reflects in its community life some of the national problems of population pressure, of agricultural economy, malnutrition, and slow rate of accepting government-sponsored programmes as evidenced by instances of resistance and evasion which will be discussed later. 369

If, however, no single concrete statement about Silwa applies to other villages in Upper Egypt, the writer can tentatively assume that through the diversity of details there runs a common outlook and ethos of life and that very few differences obtain with regard to the cultural values and the aims and methods of socialization.[1]

Silwa, however, was not primarily chosen for a field-work investigation for its 'typicalness' or otherwise, and the writer must admit that 'the prime mover' for this selection was his personal connection with the village. In it he was born and brought up till the age of seven, when he left to receive his primary-school education in Aswan, his secondary education in Sohaj, province of Jirja, and his university course in Cairo. Throughout his life he has never severed his contacts with his birthplace as he used to stay there during summer holidays and the short-term vacations. The writer lived in close emotional, spiritual and intellectual touch with the villagers, a position which has its merits and demerits for such a study. 121 [123]

The choice of such a village was also appropriate as it presents a convenient starting point for a first study of this kind, as the village is relatively isolated and homogeneous where the traditional culture is presumably better preserved than others in more contact with city life. With fewer social sub-divisions, with no complexity of social classes, of differential functions and of division of labour, and with the dominance of universals and a minimum of alternatives and specialities in social behaviour, such a community is more amenable to study for a single investigator.[2] [184]

With no problem of learning the language or even the dialect, the six months of field work were fairly adequate to carry out such an investigation.

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[1] For the substantiation or modification of such a statement, research in other Provinces has to be considered. The gap in such studies has been felt by many scholars. 'The Near and Middle East can show practically no contributions to these studies.' Margaret Read, *Education and Cultural Tradition*, London, 1951, p. 20. 'No Moslem writer, in either medieval or modern times, has condescended to describe the organization of village life in his country.' H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part 1, London, 1950, p. 5.

[2] The terms 'universals, alternatives and specialities' have been introduced by R. Linton and are used here in the same way. See his book *The Study of Man*, New York, 1946, pp. 272–4. R. Firth refers to the value of concentrated observation of small-unit behaviour, a type of study for which he suggests the term micro-sociology, in *Elements of Social Organization*, London, 1951.

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FIRST, I should like to express my thanks to my father and mother in Silwa who have patiently endured sacrifices for my education. To them I dedicate this book, and to the people of Silwa who, all the time the study was in progress, were wondering about the purpose of this work. 000

I wish to express my indebtedness to Prof. Margaret Read, who on all occasions has provided me with sound guidance and valuable advice. Without her keen insight and critical suggestions I would have been unable to see the 'wood'; and would have been lost among the 'trees'.

I should like also to express my gratitude to all those teachers whose ideas and suggestions, whether directly or indirectly, have influenced me in writing this book, especially the late Prof. Mannheim, Prof. Lauwerys, Prof. Fortes, and Prof. Sprott.

Last, but not least, I should like to pay tribute to the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (New York) without whose generous aid the manuscript could not have been published. To the members of its Board, for their encouragement, I am extremely grateful. 120

> If there is not to be a wide gulf between the élite, and the ordinary run of people, then it is necessary that our cultural mentors should train themselves in a sympathetic sensibility towards the tastes . . . and the day-today habits of common folk. . . . What is rather needed is much more study of the nature of the impulses which the supposedly vulgar mass is obeying, and of the reasons why the impulses take the direction they do.
>
> SIR FRED CLARKE, *Freedom in the Educative Society.*

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Introduction

THEORETICAL LEADS AND METHODS OF THE STUDY

This is a study of the social and psychological aspects of education in a village community in which an interdisciplinary approach has been adopted. For the sociological part which forms the main body of the book, the writer has attempted to utilize many of the conceptual categories and methods usually employed in studies of total culture which aims at creating out of the diverse pieces of human realities 'a coherent representation of a society, in terms of the general principles of organization and motivation that regulate behaviour in it'.[1] To achieve this purpose, many of the theoretical assumptions utilized in research in Anthropology and Sociology have been applied, for 'there can be no valuable empirical observations without the lead of a theory'.[2] There is no claim of originality in the theoretical leads of this work, as the writer only attempted to examine 'how finely some tools given by wiser men might cut'. It is becoming increasingly important in any research to satisfy three main requirements; the first is to make explicit one's own assumptions that guided the work; the second is to describe the methods and techniques used; and the third is the extent to which one's ideas and methods have undergone change during the actual work, for research is equally a learning process for the person conducting it.[3]

Throughout the book the cultural approach has been the dominant one. The appreciation of 'culture' as a phenomenon *sui generis* and its explanatory value for the understanding of human behaviour have been one of the major achievements of modern anthropology.[4] There is no need here to discuss the development of this concept of culture; it is sufficient only to state the ways in which the term is to be used. Wherever possible, the writer has tried to perceive culture at its three levels, the functional, the historical and the psychological.

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[1] Meyer Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, London, 1945, Foreword, p. vii.

[2] B. Malinowski, in his preface to A. Richards, *Hunger and Work in a Savage Society*, London, 1932, p. xi.

[3] Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community*, New Haven, 1941, p. 6.

[4] In such a statement, it is recognized that the continuity of culture does not depend upon the existence of any particular individuals. Clyde Kluckhohn and William Kelly, 'The Concept of Culture', *The Science of Man*, New York, 1946, pp. 78–106. However, there need be no contradiction between viewing culture as organic or personalistic and

What Malinowski expressed as the functional point of view is concerned with the interrelatedness of the various institutions, social structures, artifacts, mental and moral disciplines in the life of the human group studied. The functional approach is basically 'holistic', and culture is conceived as an integral in which the various items are interdependent.[1] As the social system is not an aggregate, but an integrated whole, 'the function of a particular usage is the contribution it makes to the total social life as the functioning of the total social system'.[2]

The second level of 'culture' is the historical; time being as important as space. Temporal factors and historical determinants have been taken into account by many of the present-day 'functionalists' for the understanding of the social present and of the phenomena of social change.[3] [105] It would have been of great value if there had been historical records about the village under study; there are even no past statistics that might indicate the historical development of such social items as population, resources, division of land and the like. [103] For the villagers, history is mainly what is contained in the memories of the living generations through oral transmission, or what is communicated by the literate section of the community, e.g. smatterings of the history of the Arabs, the Prophet and the Saints. It is obvious, however, that the village cannot be considered as a self-contained structural unit but has to be related to the forces of the national history and their repercussions, if any, on the village.[4]

In dealing with the psychological level of culture, the trend is not so clear, since this approach is relatively recent. Moreover, the issue concerning the extent to which a sociological study of this kind should extend its inquiry into the psychological field has not been fully accepted.[5] Added

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as super-organic or impersonalistic, provided we are aware that they are two different levels of abstraction, with the former being prior to the latter logically and genetically. David Bidney, 'Human Nature and the Cultural Process', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLIX, 1947, p. 380.

[1] B. Malinowski, article 'Culture' in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* and in *Scientific Theory of Culture*, University of North Carolina Press, 1944.

[2] Radcliffe-Brown, quoted by E. Evans-Pritchard, *Social Anthropology*, London, 1951, p. 54.

[3] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p. 60. For a criticism of the extreme functionalists who ignore the historical dimension see A. Victor Murray, 'The Limits of Functional Anthropology', in *Overseas Education*, Vol. X, 1938–9, pp. 41–5, and Max Gluckman, 'An Analysis of the Sociological Theories of Bronislow Malinowski', *Rhodes Livingstone Papers*, No. 16, O.U.P., 1949.

[4] Julian H. Steward, *Area Research* (Social Research Science Council), New York, 1950, p. 22.

[5] The British school of Anthropology, in contrast with the American school, is on the whole reluctant to include the 'subjective' psychological phenomena of 'culture' in its

to this, is the fact that there is no single system of psychology which one could apply with scientific assurance; and even experimental psychology contains an air of unreality and artificiality with regard to cultural and social behaviour.[1] Yet the increasing attempts for rapprochement between the social sciences as an ideal to be achieved, as evidenced in the challenging literature already written, made the writer convinced of the value of an integrative approach in his study.[2]

Nadel, for instance, maintains that both the functional and historical approaches to culture imply, to a greater or lesser degree, the influence of psychological phenomena, but that in neither of them is the part played by psychology in human culture explicitly and openly recognized.[3] Moreover, many of the American anthropologists assert that 'there is more to any culture than meets the eye', and that the 'functionalists' have only confined themselves to the 'overt' or 'explicit' aspects of culture that lie open to observation. The data of culture, however, contain 'feelings', 'thoughts', and 'motivations' for which they suggested terms such as 'covert' or 'implicit' culture which is not synonymous with 'subjective'.[4] In this way society is likened to the individual, the understanding of whom does not only depend on what he can tell us, or what he knows about himself, but equally on what he is reticent about and what he does not know about himself, which is an important factor in his personality.[5]

The recent interest in the psychological phenomena of culture has produced a specific type of approach called the 'typological or characterological', expressed mainly in the writings of Mead, Benedict, and Bateson. The three writers in their statements have attempted to establish an analogy between the variations between cultural selectivity and the individuals' temperaments, thus bringing problems of psychology to the foreground in sociological research. According to Mead, 'each simple homogeneous culture can give scope only to a few of the varied human endowments, disallowing or penalizing others too antithetical to its major emphases to find room in its walls. Having originally taken its values from

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orbit of inquiry and prefers to keep the two disciplines separate. See E. E. Evans-Pritchard, op. cit.

[1] F. C. Bartlett, 'Psychological Methods and Anthropological Problems' in *Africa*, Vol. X, 1937, pp. 401–19.

[2] A plea for inter-disciplinary approach for 'the explanation and prediction of human behaviour, individual and collective' is made by John Gillin, 'A Unified Science of Human Behaviour' in *Social Forces*, Vol. XXVIII, October 1949, pp. 110–12. The same need runs through all the writings of Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, London, 1946; *Man and Society*, London, 1946; his introduction to Viola Klein, *Feminine Character*, London, 1946. Studies towards the Integration of Social Science are carried out by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations; see its journal *Human Relations*.

[3] S. F. Nadel, 'The Typological Approach to Culture' in *Character and Personality*, Vol. V, 1937, p. 268.

[4] Covert—overt culture is Linton's term, and explicit—implicit is Kluckhohn's.

[5] Clyde Kluckhohn, 'Covert Culture and Administrative Problems' in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLV, 1943, pp. 213–29, and his review of Malinowski's 'Dynamics of Culture Change' in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LI, 1946, pp. 571–3.

the values dear to some human temperaments and alien to others, a culture embodies these values more and more firmly in its structure, in its political and religious systems, in its art and literature, and each new generation is shaped firmly and definitely to the dominant trends.'[1] For Benedict, cultural configurations are mere expressions of autonomous psychological trends, leading to the integration of culture and producing the 'ideal type' and the 'deviant'. In this way, the typical personality amongst the Plains Indians is somewhat manic or Dionysian, while that of the Zuni Indians is self-effacing or Apollonian.[2] Bateson explains culture change as the appropriateness of such a given change to the properties and 'genius' of the culture concerned. The circularity between the individual and his society must mean that 'the culture in some way affects the psychology of the individuals, causing whole groups of individuals to think and feel alike. A culture perpetuates itself through education, inducing and promoting certain types of psychological processes, or by selection, favouring those individuals who have an innate tendency to psychological processes of a certain kind.'[3]

The exponents of the 'culture pattern theory' have been subjected to various criticisms. The type of integration they infer is 'impressionistic' and oversimplified. Other critics maintain that the patterns formulated are of an 'aesthetic nature' rather than scientific, and that pattern-consciousness is a product of the mind of these writers and not necessarily derived from the cultural data observed.[4] If this 'pattern-formation' is based on an analogy with the individual, psychologists, and especially clinical psychologists, categorically deny the fact that there is an individual who is 'fully integrated' or 'inherently harmonious'.[5] As one of the most trenchant critics of the cultural pattern theory, Nadel finds it something of a miscellany made up of various cultural sectors and forces, e.g. unconscious choices, tacit impulses and diffuse emotional motives, rational purposes, and moral values and judgments.[6] If some kind of integration is necessary for the survival of society, it does not necessarily have to be focused on one *idée fixe*, a single attitude or value about which the rest of cultural content is organized. 'Many cultures seem to include a considerable number of attitudes and values all of which are significant, and each of which serves as a focal point for the integration of a different sector of the total culture.'[7]

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[1] Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, London, 1935, Introduction.

[2] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, London, 1949.

[3] Gregory Bateson, *Naven*, Cambridge, 1936, p. 113.

[4] Petrim Sorokin, *Society, Culture and Personality*, New York, 1947, pp. 337–41, reviews the various concepts of integrations and attempts to establish the criteria of causal-functional and meaningful logico-aesthetic integration. See also S. F. Nadel, op. cit.

[5] Géza Roheim, *Psycho-Analysis and Anthropology* (*Culture, Personality and the Unconscious*), New York, 1950.

[6] *Foundations of Social Anthropology*, London, 1951, pp. 391–2.

[7] Ralph Linton in Abraham Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*, New York, 1939, Foreword, p. ix.

THEORETICAL LEADS AND METHODS OF THE STUDY

While the 'typologists' have carried their concept of integration to that length, the critics of their approach however have not abandoned the concept of 'the unitary character of society', not on a single value or affect, but in a threefold frame of reference, including the integration of purposes, a pattern of psychological nature and a pattern of logical consistency. With the alignment, coincidence, and interrelation of these facets of culture, its possible unity and consistency emerge as an outcome of analysis and social understanding. In this way, certain constellations of cultural behaviour could be solely and intelligibly understood in terms of either logical consistency or rational purposes, implying some measure of fitness between this type of behaviour and its psychological functions. However, certain actions cannot be explained in the light of these two categories, being irrational or non-logical, and in such cases psychological explanations are required and appropriate.[1]

With this frame of reference, it would be possible to conceive different expressions in cultural contents as well as selected biases and 'preferred persistent tendences' as put forward by Bartlett.[2] From Nadel and Linton, the writer finds his most satisfactory theoretical explanations for the selectivity of culture and for the interlocking of its contents, and he turns now to search for his leads with regard to the various methods used by a society for its cultural continuity. This leads to the vast field of culture, personality, and national character studies which has been extending so rapidly during the last ten years. The purpose of these studies is to ascertain how various cultures affect the personality of their individuals, producing different personality structures. What is meant here by the personality is neither the autonomous nor the purely biological or universal characteristics of the individual. Personality must be viewed primarily as a configuration of responses which an individual has developed as a result of his experience.[3] With Linton's masterly analysis of the relation between culture and personality, it is only important here to note that by the explanatory concept of personality we mean the 'typical individual' or, according to Bartlett, 'the Social Personality'.[4] It is impossible to give here any adequate review of such studies, but it could be stated that they bring out the impact of culture, the ways it conditions individual behaviour, motivations, perception, and attitudes, and portray the cultural forces producing a type of personality with 'predictable behaviour'.[1] Many of these studies, under the influence of the Freudian psychology, lay their emphasis on child-rearing practices, such as sphincter control, the weaning situation or manner of swaddling, as the basic determinant of adult personality or national character, or as ultimate causes of Japan's or Germany's going to war.[2] Moreover, many of these studies ignore or attribute little importance to social institutions, value systems, and forces of history, economics, and politics. One of the most sober and balanced approaches to this question is that of Kluckhohn and Leighton in their writings on the Navaho.[3]

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[1] S. F. Nadel, op. cit., Chapter xiii.

[2] F. C. Bartlett, *Remembering*, London, 1932, p. 255.

[3] R. Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality*, London, 1947, p. 83. G. Bateson, 'The Cultural Determinants of Personality', in McV. Hunt (ed.), *Personality and Behaviour Disorders*, Vol. XI, New York, 1944. P. Sorokin, likening the newly-born baby to a phonograph, says with reference to the biological endowments that 'a well-constructed phonograph, to be sure, plays any record better than a poorly constructed phonograph. . . . But what "socio-cultural records" he will play (whether a Beethoven symphony or jazz) are dependent relatively little on the biological factors and are acquired mainly through the process of interaction with other human beings.' Ibid., Vol. XI, p. 5.

[4] 'Personality Structure', like 'culture', is an abstraction, based on the observation of the 'norm' in variations of behaviour exhibited by individuals.

This approach of Culture-Personality brought to the forefront the problems involved in the individual's development and his adaptation to the cultural situation in the process of growing up. Some social anthropologists, such as Firth and Richards, have described 'what' is transmitted to the growing child during his life cycle, but 'how' the transmission of the cultural heritage takes place has received less attention.[4] According to Kardiner, the 'minutiae' of the cultural procedures are as important as the end-product to the understanding of both culture and personality formation.[5] It is only recently that anthropology, enriched by personality psychology and psycho-analytical concepts, has concerned itself with the genetic development of cultural norms, attitudes, and skills in the growing individual. This type of approach, with its varying emphases, is sometimes called 'diachronic', explaining how an antecedent condition of society is converted into some subsequent condition and thus includes the study of individuals.[6] In the 'synchronic' approach, however, culture is regarded as something 'given' and as a matter of adult transmission from one group to another and from one generation to another. 'The supposed "givenness" of culture is the most serious obstacle to our real understanding of culture and culture change and their relationship to individual personality. . . . From the culture-acquiring child point of view, we find that culture is something to be gradually and gropingly explored and discovered '[1]

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[1] For a valuable collection of articles on this theme of 'Culture-Personality' see Clyde Kluckhohn and Henry A. Murray (ed.), *Personality in Nature, Society and Culture*, New York, 1948. For a good bibliography and survey of studies on national character see Julian H. Steward, ibid., pp. 75–83, and G. Bateson, 'Morale and National Character', in Godwin Watson, *Civilian Morale*.

[2] An extreme example of this approach is Geoffrey Gorer's *The American People*, New York, 1948, and in collaboration with J. Rickman, *The People of Great Russia*, London, 1950. For a specific type of approach to national character see Raymond B. Cattell, 'The Dimensions of Culture Patterns by Factorization of National Characteristics', in *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, October 1949.

[3] A. and D. Leighton, *The Navaho Door*, Harvard University Press, 1945. A. Leighton and C. Kluckhohn, *The Children of the People*, Harvard, 1948.

[4] See Meyer Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, London, 1938, p. 6.

[5] A. Kardiner, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society*, New York, 1945, p. 4.

[6] M. Mead, 'Character Formation and the Diachronic Theory', in M. Fortes (ed.), *Social Structure*, Oxford, 1949, p. 18.

This approach has resulted in a number of studies on the 'socialization' and the 'growing up' of the individual in his or her cultural context, showing how the child in its development gradually approximates to the general orientations of the social personality of the mature adult. In this manner, these studies directly touch the educational issues involved in social and cultural adaptation. They bring to the forefront the ways in which the individual becomes a culture-carrier and a culture-modifier. The details of the learning process, 'the cultural shaping of appetites', the social disciplines, and the system of reward and punishment, all find their place in the study of socialization, through which cultural transmission is made possible by replacing 'outer force' by 'inner compulsion'. In this manner the link between 'culture' and 'education' becomes obvious, and the approaches of cultural anthropology and sociology can be greatly relevant to educational questions.

This process of replacing the social force by individual acceptance of a basic minimum of conformity has led to the adoption of certain theoretical concepts and findings of psychology by some social anthropologists. In this particular field of child development, the work of psycho-analysts and clinical psychologists has been the most relevant to anthropologists. Some of their findings, believed to be universal with regard to characteristics of adolescence or the absolute connection between toilet training, early infantile experience, and character traits, have been checked and modified by anthropologists working in cultures different from the European background.[2]

However, the orthodox psycho-analytical emphasis on childhood experiences to the minimization of later possibilities of re-education has been criticized by many psychologists and psycho-analysts of the so-called 'Neo-Freudian' school, with its sociological orientation.[3] Whatever the criticism of clinical psychology may be, the writer accepts their assumption that childhood training and disciplines form one of the resources of society for channelling human energy into the preferred cultural responses. The position of psycho-analysts sophisticated with the findings of social anthropology is made clear in Erikson's recent work on *Childhood and Society* from which the following statement has been taken in connection with education amongst the Sioux Indians:

'A first impression suggests that the cultural demand for generosity received its early foundation from the privilege of enjoying the nourishment and reassurance emanating from the unlimited breast-feeding; while the necessity of suppressing the biting rage contributed to the tribe's always ready ferocity.

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[1] E. Sapir, 'The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures' in *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. V, 1943, pp. 408–15.

[2] M. Mead, 'The Primitive Child', in Murchison, *Handbook of Child Psychology*, New York, 1946.

[3] Famous amongst these 'Neo-Freudians' are Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, and Abram Kardiner.

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'We are not saying here that their treatment in babyhood causes a group of adults to have certain traits—as if you turned a few knobs in your child-training system and you fabricated this or that kind of tribal or national character. In fact we are not discussing traits in the sense of irreversible aspects of character. We are speaking of goals and values and of the energy put at their disposal by child-training systems. Such values persist because public opinion continues to consider them "natural" and does not admit of alternatives. . . . But values do not persist unless they work, economically, psychologically and spiritually, and I argue that to this end they must continue to be anchored, generation after generation, in early child-training; to remain consistent, must be embedded in a system of continued economic and cultural syntheses. For it is the synthesis operating within a culture which increasingly tends to bring into close-knit thematic relationship and mutual amplification such matters as climate and anatomy, economy and psychology, society and child-training.'[1]

Kardiner, in collaboration with Linton, is perhaps one of the most important clinical psychologists who have applied psycho-analysis to the study of culture. He developed the concept of basic personality structure, an abstraction which can be deduced from the content and organization of a culture, with a kind of dialectic between it and the cultural institutions. Kardiner maintains that, in this way, his scheme is interactional and dynamic, as 'changes in certain institutions result in changes in basic personality structure, while such basic personality changes, in turn, lead to the modification and reinterpretation of existing institutions'.[2] Kardiner and Linton themselves are aware of the difficulties in their concept of the basic personality structure and especially that of equating it with the personality of the individuals of that society. Its advantage, however, over the framework of the culture pattern exponents, is that it groups together certain interrelated items of behaviour and treats them as units. A number of institutions and constellations of institutional behaviour may be orientated towards food, another towards sex, and a third towards attitudes arising out of childhood training. This concept of the 'basic personality structure' takes into account the varied range of cultural institutions with such values as rank, prestige, and status. Such an approach renders it possible to make certain predictions about the institutions which such a personality structure is likely to invent, accept, or reject.[3] Unlike the orthodox psycho-analysts, Kardiner includes in his scheme the boon of culture as well as its discontents, as evidenced in his emphasis on the term 'ego structure' rather than 'the libidinal ties'.[4] He places adequate emphasis on the social

[1] Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, London, 1950, pp. 121–2.

[2] R. Linton in Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*, p. vii.

[3] A. Kardiner, *Psychological Frontiers of Society*, p. 29.

[4] In this way he accepts the functionalist approach, in which culture is viewed as increasing the individual power of achievement, an 'initial instalment' of freedom as well

forces, although here the interaction of the basic personality structure on 121 the cultural institutions has not been worked out satisfactorily. His methodology of culture analysis on the criteria of security systems, sexual controls, points of tension, satisfaction of dependency cravings, social disciplines, fantasy gratification provides possible and feasible 'pegs' for constellations of human behaviour. It also provides a scope for a better understanding of certain universal features of culture, such as dreams and folklore, in a functional way, by establishing their linkage with other cultural constellations.[1] Thus, in this work, many of Kardiner's constructs have been utilized for the explanation of certain aspects of our data, especially in connection with folk and children's tales, dreams, food anxieties, and sexual behaviour.

The field methods used in this study are those of the current anthropological repertory depending mainly on hearing and seeing through participant observation, informants, and asking questions of many adults and [124] children on certain problems and to check data given by informants.[2] For information about children, the Kuttabs and the elementary school were available centres together with a 'children's hour' organized in the writer's house to which children between seven and twelve years old came on three occasions. It was impossible to stimulate adolescent interest in such a gathering, partly because of their economic responsibilities, and [156] partly because of their excessive shyness and reserve, and this perhaps accounts for the thinness of our observations concerning this age group. Intelligence tests, Stewart Emotional Response, Moral Ideology, Story 135 Completion and Rorschach tests, were administered to children, with the exception of the last test which included adults as well.

A preliminary statement about the choice of certain psychological tests is necessary here to indicate the extent of their relevance to our study. The Moral Ideology, the Emotional Response, and the Story Completion tests are intended to reveal some of the norms and the attitudes which children acquire at various stages of development and some of their

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as restricting individual impulses for the purposes of social action. See Malinowski, *Freedom and Civilization*, London, 1947, p. 31. Freud has emphasized the inhibitory and restrictive forces of culture (Super-Ego). See his book *Civilization and its Discontents*.

[1] For criticisms of the Kardiner-Linton approach see S. F. Nadel, *Foundations of Social Anthropology*, pp. 403–8; Henry Ozanne, 'Synthesis in Social Sciences', in *Sociometry*, Vol. VIII, 1945, pp. 208–15, where he maintains that Kardiner's interpretations of the primitive cultures studied, though feasible and meaningful, are only possible explanations and are not necessarily ones arising from the material concerned. As a psychologist he, like some anthropologists, objects to the superimposition of psychological categories, conceptualized in terms of the individual, on sociology, which conceptualizes in terms of the group. See also L. M. Hanks in his review of Kardiner, 'The Individual and His Society', *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. XII, 1940, p. 475, where he emphasizes the importance of behaviour and attitudes falling outside the range defined by institutional behaviour.

[2] For an assessment of my informants, see Appendix I. See also Audrey T. Richards, 'The Development of Field Work Methods in Social Anthropology', in *The Study of Society*, ed. by F. C. Bartlett, London, 1939.

125 reactions and sentiments for different situations. These tests are also expected to draw the attention of the field worker to data which otherwise might escape his notice.

The Projective Test of the Rorschach Ink Blots is growing in popularity as a technique in field work especially amongst those anthropologists who are concerned with the relations between culture and personality. The test is intended to reveal 'the basic organization of the personality structure, including the fundamental affective and cognitive features of mental life'.[1] In spite of many difficulties and limitations in applying such a test, some Rorschach researchers, working with anthropologists, have noted that the principles of the test could be applied with some validity in cross-cultural situations.[2]

Our purpose in administering Intelligence tests was not primarily for inter-group comparisons, but mainly to elicit information regarding the mental 'orientation' characteristic of the group. Three types of tests were selected, verbal (Kabbani's test for primary school children), a paper and pencil test (Porteus Maze), and a practical performance test (Alexander's pass-along). The assumption is that the significant differences in the score of these tests would be considered as different adjustment to different test material and situations. This could be legitimately regarded as reflection of specific qualitative factors of culture, and culturally determined forms of intelligence. In a study of the effects of culture upon children's thoughts and actions, these data are deemed relevant to our purposes.[3]

124 Our methods lack the sociological depth afforded by the gathering of life histories, and intensive case studies of families and individuals supplementing a more diffused and general study of a greater number of individuals. Resistance was expected and encountered in such attempts, even with my informants as shown in Appendix I. Various reasons can be given for such resistance. They were ill at ease at doing things for research, reluctant to engage in an activity which might be considered as dangerous gossip, especially when recorded on paper, and might reach official circles. [156] Their attitude is that personal problems should be 'covered' and not 'exposed' to others. Perhaps their interest was not sufficiently stimulated, for they would ask me, 'And what is the use of all this to us?' It became 123 obvious to me during my field work that in order to get the full co-operation of the people for such research, it was necessary to be able to help them in their everyday problems. One villager expressed this in a candid way: 'You must now be useful to us as we have been helpful to you.' A similar observation has been made by Oscar Lewis, who advocates, on the basis of his experience in Tepoztlan, the combination of research

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[1] B. Klopfer and D. Kelley, *The Rorschach Technique*, New York, 1946 edition, p. ix.

[2] Cora du Bois, *The People of Alor*, University of Minnesota Press, 1944. p. 589.

[3] S. Nadel, 'The Application of Intelligence Tests in the Anthropological Field', in *The Study of Society*, pp. 184-97. For a full account of these tests and their application and findings, see Appendices.

and service programmes as an excellent way of integrating the fields of 123
both applied and theoretical Anthropology.[1] This constraint and fear of
divulging personal information could be also attributed to the vulnerability 156
of the villagers' ego-structure, to which we shall refer later.[2]

What relevance have such assumptions and approach to a study in 121
education? A great part of the answer to such a question must be obvious by now. If education, in its broadest sense, is the process of transmitting the cultural contents, values, attitudes, and the body of technical and social experience from one generation to another, surely the sociological approach is of the greatest value in educational research and educational policies. As Sir Fred Clarke expressed it, culture is the whole life-medium, and not the background with which education is concerned.[3] Formal educational institutions, from schools to universities, are only one transmissive agent of any nation's 'way of life'. Our approach does not preclude the assumption that they are amongst the most efficient means of such transmission or that they are also a potent force in effecting social change. Here we are mainly concerned with education as the means of cultural continuity, of building social solidarity and cohesion. It is probably because of uncritical faith in schools and other formal educational institutions that this transmissive role of education has been ignored. This is vaguely felt when some educationists go to the extreme and advocate leaving children absolutely free for the development of their peculiarities of interest and behaviour. Such are rightly designated as cranks. Apart from those who entertain the ideas of Rousseau's Emile, 'we are well aware that children learn their patterns of social behaviour, their ideas on family life and earning a living, their value systems in relation to social and economic life, far more extensively and intensively outside school than inside'.[4] Society thus keeps itself as a going concern by educating its individuals to its established and time-tested ways of believing, feeling, thinking, and reacting for purposes of social action.[5]

Looking at education from this viewpoint may perhaps be disheartening to those educational planners and administrators who are anxious to go ahead with the job, but, as Karl Mannheim repeatedly emphasized, 'no educational activity or research is adequate in the present stage of consciousness unless it is conceived in terms of sociology of education'. 'Society blindness' or lack of 'social awareness' may lead to totalitarianism, or at least to educational malaise and wishful thinking.[1]

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[1] Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village*, Introduction, p. xv.

[2] Differences between cultures are also reflected in the varying ease with which field workers could procure life-histories. This point was brought to my attention by Cora du Bois who mentioned to me the striking difference in this connection between the flow of the Navaho and the constraint of the Alorese. Of course, my informants, being related
to me, would not have accepted money, but perhaps other services. In such a community, [129]
people would not accept financial recompense for information given to one from the village itself. In case of an outsider, such payment might be a good incentive in a community which jealously guards against the divulging of personal and family privacies. For motivation of informants see S. F. Nadel, 'The Interview in Social Anthropology', in *The Study of Society*, ed. by F. C. Bartlett.

[3] Sir Fred Clarke, *Freedom in the Educative Society*, London, 1948.

[4] Paper read by M. Read before the Education Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Edinburgh, August, 1951.

[5] Clyde Kluckhohn, *Mirror for Man*, New York, 1949, p. 188.

This sociological approach to education has stimulated few studies for the evaluation of educational systems and policies as a function of a certain social order. In his *Education and Social Change* Sir Fred Clarke has shown that, in England, although many formulations about educational policy are consistently adopted in practice, they are yet less explicitly recognized in theory. Such policies and practices taken for granted are nonetheless potent in shaping the trends of English education, and his book consists of an analysis of the social and historical determinants of the educational system. He also made a plea for examining the various types of educational institutions and for analysing the extent to which they have reflected certain characteristics of English life.[2]

For the United States, the book entitled *Who Shall be Educated?* is an example of a sociological approach to the function of the public school system in the American society. It shows how only partly true is the Americans' faith that their education system provides everybody with an equal chance to the realization of the 'American dream'. The authors, on the basis of their sociological findings, maintain that the American educational institutions cannot be satisfactorily explained by such labels as the democratic spirit, the American Constitution, or equality of educational opportunities, but must be examined in the light of the status system which operates in the lives of American children. The freedom of educators and administrators who conceive of the educational system as serving democratic purposes is hedged about by certain irreducible stubborn facts about human beings, social institutions and the spheres of valuations within them.[3] After describing some case studies of children, the authors observe that 'even at the early age of ten or twelve, these children all were travelling different paths of life. The school, with its common life, brought most of them together and gave them a common experience and a common literacy. But, as Miss Crane (their teacher) knew, the prescribed social lines of the community fell upon them and even influenced their learning in school. What a given child learned was not in Miss Crane's power to determine. She could try to teach them all the same things, but they would not learn the same things.'[4]

In the light of such facts, the authors conclude that it is desirable to gear the selecting machinery of educational institutions to the demands and capacity of the social structure. If too few people are selected and promoted through the educational system, the upper levels will be filled through other agencies and perhaps filled with people not properly trained. If too many are selected and pushed up, competition will become fierce for the higher jobs; some people will have to accept jobs below the level for which they are trained, and will consequently become frustrated and cynical. The authors assert: 'We need to see more clearly that various subgroups in our society can aim at different goals and that it is not necessary for everyone to shoot for the top.' A certain amount of social mobility seems necessary to maintain cohesion; a large measure of it would spell social instability and too little would give rise to dissatisfaction.[1]

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[1] K. Mannheim, *Diagnosis of Our Time*, London, 1943.

[2] Sir Fred Clarke, *Education and Social Change—An English Interpretation*, London, 1940.

[3] By W. Lloyd Warner, Robert Havighurst and Martin B. Loeb, London, 1946.

[4] W. Lloyd Warner *et al.*, op cit., p. 15.

A more functional approach has been adopted in a project carried out by the American Youth Council in connection with the Negroes in the United States. The project has centred around the question 'How does the fact of being born a Negro affect the developing personality of a boy or a girl?' In this manner the writers attempted to show the relation between the home environment and the school. We cannot review the findings of these studies here.[2] It is only relevant to refer to them as another example of the increasing awareness to the importance of sociological research for programmes of educational reconstruction.

With these assumptions of theory and methods of research, this study has been written with the transmissive function of education as the centre around which the village institutions, value-systems, attitudes and aims and methods of 'growing up' are arranged. Education here is considered in its two aspects. The first, the technical, consists in acquiring the skills and techniques which enable the individual to become socially useful and a productive member, contributing to the group wealth and strength. The second aspect, which Kluckhohn calls the regulatory training, is the society's means of reducing as much as possible the individual's 'nuisance value' within the group and of promoting to the maximum social cohesion.[3]

Moreover, studies of this kind would help in evaluating or at least viewing in perspective the national policy in education. What is the function of the modern system of schools and universities in Egyptian society? To what extent are these institutions functionally related to the needs of

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[1] It must be noted here that the frame of reference of this book is status and rank and their effect on equality of educational opportunity in the American class-structured society. The same approach has been adopted by Warner and others in their studies in the Yankee City series.

[2] This series contains five volumes:
Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage* (American Council of Education), Washington, 1940.
Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways*, 1940.
Charles Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, 1941.
Lloyd Warner, Buford Junker and Walter Adams, *Colour and Human Nature*, 1941.
Robert Sutherland, *Colour, Class and Personality*, 1942.

[3] The distinction between these two aspects of education is made by Clyde Kluckhohn, *Mirror for Man*, p. 190. A similar distinction is also made by M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*.

21 cultural continuity and social change? How can modern schooling be organized to promote economic productivity? Does the national system of education operate within the traditional value system and social sanctions, and if not what does it offer instead? Of course, these issues cannot be answered in this book, for we are mainly concerned with the educative process of the traditional pattern in a community which is hardly influenced by modern schooling.

In summary we may say that this is an attempt to study childhood in an [23] Egyptian village community. Children are not only observed in school or classroom, but also in their everyday life within the social group in which they live, work, play, and move. As far as is known to the writer there have been no studies of this kind, except a few autobiographies written by some eminent writers.[1] Such autobiographies, however, must be regarded, if to be made use of in sociological studies, in the light of two main reservations. The first is the therapeutic manipulation of the writer's memory for certain experiences, and the second is the requirements of literary style.[2]

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[1] See, for example, Taha Hussain, *al Ayyam* (in Arabic), translated into English by E. H. Paxton, *An Egyptian Childhood*, London, 1932. Ahmad Ameen, *Hayati* (*My Life*), Cairo, 1950 (in Arabic). Edward Atiyah, *An Arab Tells His Story*, London, 1946.

[2] See Margaret Mead, 'Research on Primitive Children', in L. Carmichael, *Manual of Child Psychology*, New York, 1946, pp. 694–5.

PART ONE

7

Chapter One

LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

The natural resources, methods of production, means of livelihood and property system of any community provide a tangible mechanism which regulates and gives stability to the relations between its members in accordance with the value system governing that culture.[1] In Silwa, the village community under study, agriculture is the basic activity of the great majority of the population. 12 24

According to the 1947 Census the distribution of occupations in Silwa is as follows:[2] 43

Occupation	*Male*	*Female*
Farmers	1288	1451
Industrial workers	47	84
Masons	47	0
Transport	36	0
Trade	60	1
Personal servants	10	387
Servants in Govt. offices and other social services	78	1
Unproductive and undefined jobs	272	86
Unemployed	292	317
TOTAL: 4457	2130	2327

Taking this table as a criterion for village occupations, it is clear that more than 60 per cent of the total population are engaged in agriculture. Yet the official census does not define its categories of occupation, and is

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[1] Ernest Beaglehole, *Property, A Study in Social Psychology*, London, 1931.

[2] *Population Census, 1947* (Book I, Province of Aswan), Government Press, Cairo, 1951, p. 25.

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463 an unsatisfactory basis, and even misleading in some ways as it does not agree with the facts observed in the field study. When I faced my informant, Ali, with the census, he rejected it as unrepresentative of the occupations of the people of Silwa. He quickly asserted that they were all farmers and that all their women were housewives, and that 'there were no other jobs for them'. After some computing, he added that there were about 60 shopkeepers and pedlars, all males.[1] Men (but not women) industrial workers might be those who are working at the water-pumping station, and those engaged in the sugar-factory in Kom Ombo, a town to the south of Silwa. The number of 47 masons, Ali said, was excessive, for he could count only twenty. The 36 persons working in transport could be those who were employed in the railway stations and the making of roads. He went on to say that the categories of servants, unproductive workers, and unemployed might be those who are working in towns. He emphatically reiterated that he did not know how or from where the census authorities obtained the distribution of female occupations.

Yet whatever the census may mean by this distribution of occupations, the obvious fact is that much more than 60 per cent of the population are farmers. Some of the people who could even be classified as shop and stall keepers and industrial workers or any other occupation are normally either owners of a plot of land or partly engaged in agricultural activities.[2]

463 609 Moreover, in the village there are four families of strangers. The one living on the western edge of the village is mainly engaged in carpentry such as making of doors, chests, benches, beds, and water-wheels (which was their main work before the introduction of perennial irrigation), and some farm implements. The iron implements such as the sickle and the hoe are usually made by the itinerant blacksmith who visits the village once or twice a year. The carpenter's family is known to have originally come from the Province of Kena almost fifty years ago and have settled in Silwa ever since. They have no workshop but usually work in the homes of their customers.

[323] The main occupation of the second family, living at a distance of half a mile from the village on the northern edge, is pottery. Its members provide the village with most of the pots, pans, jars, water-pots and other utensils required for everyday life. The reason for their settlement on the northern side is to be nearer to the hills and the Nile from where they can procure clay, a whitish variety, needed for their job.

465 The carpenter and the potter, as well as the barber and the blacksmith, do not usually receive their fees on the spot, but go for their round during the harvest to collect their 'customs'. Every farmer is supposed to give them some of his crops, varying, of course, according to the services ren-

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[439] [1] Very few women pedlars come from other provinces during harvest times to sell goods to women villagers and are called gipsies.

[2] For a general survey of agricultural problems in the Middle East, see B. A. Keen, *The Agricultural Development of the Middle East*, London, 1946.

dered; but everyone must give them something, even 'ten or eleven cobs 465
of millet'. The same procedure of payment applies to the village undertaker
and the man who calls the prayer-times (muazzin) and the postman. [792]
In the case of the man who leads the prayers (imam), villagers send his
'custom' to his home, besides the small amount of money he receives from
the 'Ministry of Religious Endowments'. In other words, the artisans as a
group are maintained by the community they serve, and are not paid by
a fixed price for their results. There is an observable change in this
'maintenance basis' especially in the case of the carpenter on his making
of furniture and doors.

The members of the third family of strangers are Christians (Coptic 463
Church) who mainly derive their livelihood from the income of their corn
mill and who live on the other side of the railway track. They had monopolized [256]
milling for twenty years. Then four persons from the village in
competition started another corn-mill. Both these undertakings later cooperated [477]
and raised the charges, and it was this that gave an impetus to
the whole village last year to establish a communal corn-mill.

The fourth family which has a specialized job is that of the water-carriers
who are also alien to the village. They live on its western border
nearer to the Nile from which they draw water to distribute in water-skins [312]
to the homes of government officials, shopkeepers, childless couples and
others, when extra water is required. They are paid either in bread, corn, [465]
or money, according to what they bring, and not on a 'maintenance basis'
as their comparatively late arrival in the village has been welcomed by
government officials, policemen, or childless people.

Sixty years ago the first shop was opened in the village by a family 443
called al Hudoor from Esna, in the Province of Kena.[1] Ten years later the
first man from the village itself opened the second shop. At present, there [609]
are about thirty shops of varying size which have mostly started up during
the last ten years. Payment for goods sold has been, more often than not,
at the end of the harvest period. The shopkeepers keep an account of what [952]
customers buy, to be presented to them at this time. The same applies at
present to most of the village government officials or wage-earners, who
pay their bills for purchased goods at the end of the month.

The market-day, held every Saturday (i.e. at the beginning of the week),
is the main day for buying and selling. On this day economic as well as
social exchange takes place, and it is said, 'Even to get the market's dust
is better than not going to it'. Until three years ago the majority of the [439]
traders came from Edfu, the nearest town to Silwa. Retail traders, shoemakers,
butchers, silversmiths, and coffee-makers come in to sell the villagers
their goods, while commercial dealers buy crops, sheep, chickens and
eggs. Since then, the number of traders from Edfu has diminished considerably,
as a result of the increase in the number of village traders.

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[1] Plural of 'al Hadari' meaning coming from the town, which was the name given to them by the villagers at that time and which they still retain.

LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

463 An oil-press was also started twenty years ago by a stranger from Kous,
258 and he is still referred to as Koussy. At the beginning of every summer,
[609] the shop used to press oil from the locally grown sesame (simsim). Five
years later the Omda (headman of the village) started another oil-press
[477] in competition, and this for some time gave rise to gossip concerning the
Omda's prestige in competing with the stranger. But during the last war,
as a result of rationing the oil, the flourishing undertakings closed, being
unable to come up to the hygienic requirements of the regulations and
the government controls.

463 Besides these specialized occupations there are two other occupations
undertaken by families from the village, namely weaving and hair-cutting.
[286] The two families of weavers, with their old-fashioned looms, supply all the
[294] village women with their woollen cover (worn on going outside and also
used as a blanket at night). They also weave the outer garments of the
[291] older generation of men (zabut), which they wear in winter, while the
younger generation is gradually abandoning the homespun and woven
wool for the factory-made cloth.[1]

For the last three generations these families of weavers and barbers have been carrying on with their occupations, as they possess no land. The same applies to two families of fishermen; one of these relies entirely on fishing, while the other follows it as a supplementary occupation to farming.

Midwifery, and undertaking, are also specialized pursuits which have been carried on in the same families for a long time. The same is true of the offices of the priest and of the Sheikh of the village school (Kuttab).

463 From such a survey it can be seen that the specialized occupations such
as carpentry, milling, pottery, and shopkeeping have been introduced by
178 outsiders, who, though performing an important function in the village
[609] economic life, have not been entirely accepted by the villagers as fully-
fledged members of the community. Immediately one of the villagers
themselves engages in any of these occupations, however, this particular
occupation is brought into a more conscious level of evaluation. As long
as strangers alone pursue a particular task or occupation, the villagers are
indifferent to, or deprecate, the value-prestige of that job. Yet if another
[477] villager can show that the job is as paying and rewarding as farming, then
other villagers may entertain the idea of competing with him. The reluc-
tance to embark on anything but farming is partly due to the fact that
the specialized jobs mentioned have been started by outsiders. Moreover,
there is no scope for much specialization of occupations, as an appreciable
amount of this is done by the various members of the household. Barter,
[592] milling, basket- and mat-making, and even a crude type of building is
being carried on by every household. It is the landless people who can
only gain their living by working as craftsmen or traders. It is true that,
as the technical skill required for specialized occupations is transmitted
through the kinship lines, it is not surprising to find that most of these jobs

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[1] Women do the spinning for the cloth from the sheep's fleece.

are almost hereditary, learnt by son from father or uncle. Parents who have 463
land afford their children no other opportunity but of working on it, and 178
they endeavour to keep them on the farm.

Ali maintained that 'agriculture is the best occupation and the most 463
dignified of all, an occupation which is worth while following. Apart from 462
aliens, there is no man who is not a farmer, and no woman who is not a [461]
housekeeper and a cook. A man cooking or sewing or a woman ploughing
or irrigating the land is something unheard of in our village. Indeed, one
of the reasons for marriage is the fact that some of the tasks are performed
only by a woman, and there must be a woman to do them as there always [581]
has been. Very few of our women have travelled by train, and if so, chiefly
to visit relatives in town or shrines of saints, while a much greater number [484]
of men go to town on private or official visits.' This statement shows clearly
the rigid sex-distribution in occupation. Furthermore, farming, especially 463
one's own land, is the most esteemed occupation for men, and it is only 554
necessity that forces others to be engaged in any other occupation.[1] This
attitude of mind renders the possibility of establishing an industry or craft
in the village very difficult. The prestige attached to the possession of land
is very great. A wealthy merchant is not socially on par with a farm-owner.
Farm-earnings are the most meritorious of all earnings; in other words,
they are the surest of all 'halal' earnings—legitimately deserved and thus
divinely approved. In farming, one is grappling directly with nature and [156]
getting the produce out of the soil's depths, depending on or contacting no
other human beings, whom one might oppress or be oppressed by. One has
only to sow the seeds and attend to them and God will look after the rest.
The same attitude of 'halal' earnings applies to fishing, breeding cows or
raising sheep, where the results solely depend on one's treatment and
dealing with the object to be attended to. Thus, according to Ali, 'the
evils of man are avoided'. This is certainly a fabricated religious justification
or rationalization of the most secure source of livelihood in this rural
society. The statement of my informant shows, however, the psychological
anxiety that is bound up with economic insecurity, especially in ventures [156]
that entail any dealing with people or involving human contacts.

It is also significant that to acquire land through inheritance as dis- 554
tinguished from buying it, is to be stamped with the hallmark of prestige 428
and prosperity. To be called 'heir to land' means good origin and good
status in the village.

The reasons for the social importance of land and the emotional attach- 554
ment to it are not difficult to seek. Economically speaking, land for genera- 423
tions has been the tangible bulwark against starvation and insecurity; it
never fails to give reward for its cultivation, and thus it is a permanent
property 'better than gold'. This analogy is derived from a well-known
folk-tale about a father who had two sons, bequeathing to the favourite

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[1] There appears to be no supporting evidence for this esteem either in folklore or in proverbs. There is nothing in the text of the Koran to that effect

554 one a piece of land, and to the less favoured a large piece of gold. As the
423 first son complained about his inheritance, his dying father told him that
every grain of earth he had left for him was mixed with a grain of gold,
and that if he dug well enough he would be able to extract the gold from it.
After a lapse of some time the less favoured one squandered his gold, while
[597] the other, by 'digging' harder and harder, added to the fertility of his
land and thus prospered and was worthy of his father's love. For this
reason, the latter was taken as an ideal symbol of filial piety.

As mentioned previously, to have origin in the village is also to have
423 land, and this is reflected in the scheme of the village land. The cultivable
land was divided between the descendants of 'On and Musa, the two
brothers, who were the heads of the village sections.[1] It is maintained that
every ten kasabas (land-measure) of land owned by 'On clansmen is
followed by another ten kasabas owned by Musa clansmen. 'If you have
no sahm or kirat (land-measure) handed over to you from your ancestors,
558 then you are not a full member of your clan,' Ali stated, 'and two families
425 had to migrate from the village to another village because they had to
sell their land. It is the worst lot that can befall any person. It brings
disgrace to him to abandon his father's trust, and it also means that he is
sinning against his children. There are few people still in the village who
have sold their land, and they are like those who have shed their clothes
and remained stark naked; both are the two great shame-bringing
practices.'

Yet those who are under considerable economic pressure resort to the
427 device of 'land-pawn' which entails the owner's handing over of his land
to a man in return for a comparatively large sum of money. The latter
tills the land as if it was his possession, to be returned to its original owner
on his payment of the debt. Another way of relieving economic distress
without actually selling the land is the so-called 'conditional sale', whereupon the owner sells with option to repurchase at a given date.

554 If selling land is one of the worst social practices, the acquisition of land
[425] is naturally the best one. To be able to add to one's inheritance is a sign of
parents' approval and content with their son's deeds as well as God's
[577] blessing. It is interesting to find children about the age of five or six singing
a rhyme, telling how a chicken given to a child by his mother has enabled
[857] him in the long run to acquire a 'kirat'—one twenty-fourth of a feddan.
[539] The rhyme goes on to say, 'My mother gave me a chicken, the chicken
bought me a goose, the goose bought me a small goat, the goat bought me
a sheep, the sheep bought me a small donkey, the donkey bought me a
cow and the cow bought me a kirat'. There is another version of the same
song, differing in what the cow bought for the child, and in the other
version he got a 'bride' and the bride got him a 'bridegroom—a son'.[2]

423 From the point of view of land tenure, the village is a typical example of

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[1] See Chapter II for social structure.

[2] The rhyme is occasionally associated with bouncing the ball on the wall.

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small landholders. Three decades ago, the head of one family owned about 423
thirty acres, but after his death the land was divided into smaller plots [428]
between his inheritors. At present, apart from two outside landowners who possess about sixty acres in the village, and ten other villagers who each own more than five feddans, all the rest own less than five feddans.
If the total arable land, estimated at 1350 acres, were distributed among 311
the total population of 4450 people approximately, the *per capita* share would be little less than third of an acre (seven kirats) or 0·58 crop area *per capita*, which is slightly higher than the crop area *per capita* for the whole country, i.e. 0·46.[1] Moreover, the soil of the cultivable land in the village represents the average soil in the country, judging by its taxable power, which ranges from eighty to a hundred piastres.

At this juncture, it is relevant to mention that according to the Koranic 428
law, at the death of man or woman, his or her property is shared by all the children of the deceased. We cannot go into the various details of the
intricate Moslem law of inheritance, but shall refer to some of its significant [562]
principles. A female gets a share half that of the male. The inheritance should always be awarded to the 'asaba, the patrilineal line, however distant its members may be (apart from the wife, if she lives after her husband). The law recognizes the equivalence of siblings of the same sex, and it gives no privileges to primogeniture.

During the father's life, his children, whatever their age or status, have [423]
no legal right to own any of his property.[2] Whether to divide the land each attending to his share independently, or to keep it intact and farm it co-operatively, depends on the relationship between the heirs.[3] Many factors are involved, such as the existence of half-siblings (brothers or sisters by the father only), where the possibility of division is very great, on the relations of wives and in-laws, on the father's treatment of his children while alive, and so forth. If the land as the symbol of family unity is tilled co-operatively, the married sisters then get their land produce

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[1] The 'crop area' unit is used instead of the acre because of the existence of the two systems of irrigation in various parts of the country, and hence the crop area gives a more accurate estimate of the cultivable land. For the whole country it is calculated that the land yields an average of a crop and a half per acre. For the whole country the population is 19,090,000, the cultivated area per acres, 5,585,300, and crop area 8,815,900 (Census 1947).

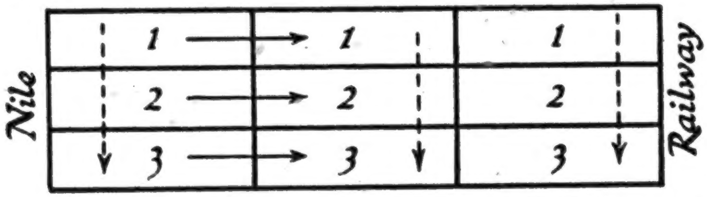
[2] See S. G. Fitzgerald, *Muhammadan Law*, London, 1931.

[3] The fear of division and perhaps the forgetting of one's name in the family has led some of the landowners to consecrate land, for all the members of his family of the patrilineal descent, which could not be owned separately, and should pass, as left, intact to the second generation and the third and so on. This type of land is called 'Wakf Ahli—family endowment', to differentiate it from Wakf Khairi—charitable endowment, consecrated for religious purposes and looked after by the Ministry of Charitable Endowments. The abuses in running these estates led the new regime that followed the abdication of ex-King Farouk to pass a law dissolving the charitable endowments (September 1952). According to this law these estates are to be distributed among the legal heirs as specified by the Islamic law of inheritance.

428 according to their share as if they were renting it to their brothers. In cases of friction, the land is parcelled between the heirs, and boundaries are [651] fixed; yet in the tax bill (wird) they are not divided and each has to pay his share of the tax, all being considered 'heirs of so and so'. This was originally a public demonstration of family unity. Lately, the separation of one's own land through official registration has been made an expensive task because of the fees required.

My informant, Mahmoud, told me that 'in these days, more often than [578] not, heirs insist on dividing the land, and this occasions the hottest disputes between brothers, sisters and relatives. Law-suits over land have sometimes cost people the land itself, when they had to mortgage more and more parts of their land to establish their rights over another part. No one "yields a finger" in his share of his father's land; and above all, obstinacy and "the assertion of one's word" complicate the matter. Our life is mostly spent in setting my right and your right—hakki hakkak.'

The actual process of dividing the land is done lengthwise, from 'the sea to the mountain' as the villagers put it. The following diagram shows how it is done:



Suppose the above plot of land is to be divided equally between three brothers; each would receive a narrow plot extending lengthwise, in the direction of the lined arrow, and not breadthwise in the direction of the dotted arrow. The land stretches normally from the Nile to the railway [311] station for more than a mile. It would be understandable that the villagers' division is better when the land varies in its fertility or ease of irrigation along that stretch. But this is always the practice, which involves more work in carrying fertilizer, and in irrigation. It also elongates the boundaries, thus providing more scope for breaking them and inviting trouble. The underlying notion behind this division, according to Mahmoud, is to share in every 'foot and finger' of the land that the father has bequeathed, irrespective of any other considerations, and hence there would be no difficulty in distributing the plots of land among the heirs. Such clinging [425] to every bit of the father's land renders the mutual transference of land, for the sake of convenience, very difficult to achieve.

241 The main crops grown are wheat and barley in winter, and millet in summer. This applies practically to every farmer in the village, as these crops provide the basis of his subsistence. Before the perennial irrigation, one main crop in winter was the general produce, but now these two

crops have been adopted, besides vegetables and clover (berseem). During 241
the last five years, persons who had sufficient land have started to grow sugar-cane and cotton with these two crops. This widened cropping has been due to the need for more cash crops, and to the increase in transport facilities for selling sugar-cane and cotton. On the whole, however, the village produces mainly subsistence crops, which form the basis of the villagers' bread intake.

The agricultural activities in the village are regulated by the time- 805
honoured Ancient Egyptian calendar which is now known as the Coptic Calendar, and this co-exists with the two other calendars, the Moslem (Hijri) and the European (Miladi).[1] These three calendars are used by the villagers in different circumstances. The Coptic Calendar is the oldest [197]
in use, followed by the Hijri or lunar one, whilst the European has been adopted in Egypt since 1875. While the Coptic Calendar, based on the solar system, is mainly used to regulate and co-ordinate the agricultural activities, the Hijri Calendar, based on the lunar system, fixes the religious and ceremonial feasts; the European is mainly used for activities connected either with legal procedures or other official business. More often than not, especially with the older generation, the European dates are changed into either the Coptic or lunar dates.[2]

The methods and implements of work are more or less the same tradi- 241
tional ones known to have been used by the Egyptian farmer for thousands of years. The 'touriah' or the 'fass' is the indispensable implement to any farmer. It is a kind of hoe which can be turned to many uses, such as breaking up clods of earth, digging furrows, scraping fertilizer clay from the hills, and so forth. For ploughing, he uses the Egyptian plough called 'mihrat', dragged by one or two yoked cows. The water-wheel and the 'shadoof' are used at present only for irrigating the small parcels of land [312]
which are higher than the water level in the canals. Such plots of land are very few, compared with large areas which are easily irrigated by merely opening the runnel between the field and the canal, which is filled by the water raised by the pumping machine. The farmer also uses the 'garraffa', which is a beam of wood or a trunk of a palm-tree, to level down land after breaking up the clods with the hoe.[3]

In these methods of work, farm labour is extensive rather than intensive. Work is spread over almost the whole year. Of course, every farmer knows [461]
that more effort and concentration are called for in the two periods, that of preparing the soil and sowing of the seeds, and that of harvesting. Again, the gathering of fertilizer and manure is an equally important and arduous task, though more spread out during the period of two or four months for

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[1] The Hijri Calendar starts with the flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622.

[2] See Appendix II for a note on the use of lunar and Coptic months in the village with the agricultural and religious activities connected with them.

[3] For methods and implements of farm work in Egypt see Henry Habib-Ayrout, *The Fellaheen*, Chapter IV, Cairo (n.d.).

241 the winter crop or summer crop respectively. The villagers depend mainly
[135] on a kind of clay (nitrous soil) brought from the eastern cliffs as fertilizer,
called 'marog'. On camel- or donkey-back it is brought to the fields after
[492] a journey of approximately six miles which takes about four hours there
and back. The saline properties of 'marog' are recognized by colour and
[239] taste. In addition, pigeon and chicken droppings, soil impregnated with
stable-dung, and oven-ashes are also used to supplement the 'marog'.
Chemical fertilizers are used by only very few people who have neither
animals nor children to bring the 'marog', or by those who have so much
land for which they could not possibly collect all the required 'marog',
and hence have to supplement it by chemical fertilizer. Chemical fertilizer
is usually preferred to nitrous clay for the cultivation of cash crops, sugarcane
and cotton, the area of which does not exceed thirty acres for the
whole village.

241 With the help of my informant, Ali, I have tried to calculate the amount
of time needed for the entire process of cultivation of both the winter and
124 summer crops. It is obvious that such a task is a somewhat complicated
one. However, we took the feddan as the functional unit of measurement
and had to assume certain criteria for the labour in the farm unit. We had
to answer questions such as: How many hours does a farmer work in the
field in a day or during different periods of work? To what extent is the
difference in output affected by physical conditions? What tools, implements
and animals do we assume to be owned by the farmer for our
calculations? How many children are assumed to be working on the farm,
and what age groups are represented? However, we agreed to take a
family, composed of a father, having two children, aged eight and thirteen,
owning a camel, and working on an acre as the basis of our calculations.
[592] This unit was not entirely arbitrary, as the average size of the family unit
is between five and six persons. To include two boys in such a family is
[162] not beyond the law of probability. The age represents one child under
[871] compulsory schooling, helping his father in the afternoon, while the other
boy has just left school on reaching adolescence, when he can be relied upon
[492] to bring the fertilizer from the hill. The camel has been chosen as the
median unit for the animal contribution to the farm work. It is true that
[231] not every farmer owns a camel, but alternatively he might well have a
[406] donkey to bring fertilizer and a cow for ploughing. In this case, he could
lend his cow for ploughing to a farmer having a camel, and ask him in
return for his camel to help him bringing extra fertilizer. One farmer may
possess a plough and a donkey, and thus he can get extra help in conveying
fertilizer by lending his plough. If a farmer has a third boy he could send
him to help in working with another farmer in return for some needed
help. However, every farmer possesses a donkey or a camel for loading as
a necessary productive agent in agriculture. Thus the writer feels that the
unit chosen is a feasible productive unit, representing the average working
conditions.

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On this assumption we worked out the following periods of labour required in farming the winter crop, and this was generally accepted by the persons to whom we showed it.

Soil preparation and seed sowing: 10 days.
Collecting fertilizer: 2 months.
Distributing the fertilizer on the land: 3 days.
Irrigation (4 times, 2 days each time): 8 days.
Harvesting: 15 days.

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As the farmer usually goes to his farm at sunrise (though unpunctuality, due to laziness, is not infrequent, specially in the case of men) and returns at sunset, he then works an average of 10 hours a day, less the interruption of about two hours for the midday meal (sometimes taken in the field, other times at home). Thus the net amount of daily work can be estimated at 8 hours.

In this way the assumed productive unit works the following hours.

For the winter crop:
Soil preparation and sowing: 80 hours adult male; 80 hours 13-year-old.
Bringing fertilizer (a load a day, involving 4 hours' work for 2 months): 240 hours 13-year-old.
Distributing fertilizer on the land: 16 hours.
Mixed labour in irrigation involving the man and 2 boys: 64 hours.
Harvesting: 120 hours adult male; 120 hours 13-year-old.
Total: 720 hours or 3 months' work.

Here is computed the specific hours involved in distinctly farm activities to the exclusion of minor jobs, such as feeding the animals, bringing food home, etc., which we assume the boy of eight years old to undertake, and the time for which cannot be reasonably computed. The following summarizes the basic work required with respect to the summer crop.

Preparation and sowing: 7 days.
Gathering fertilizer: 3 months.
Distributing fertilizer (twice, 3 days each time): 6 days.
Irrigation (8 times, 2 days each time): 16 days.
Harvesting: 15 days.

The hours involved are as follows:
Soil preparation and sowing: 56 hours adult male; 56 hours 13-year-old.
Collecting fertilizer: 360 hours 13-year-old.
Distribution of fertilizer: 48 hours adult male.
Mixed labour in irrigation: 128 hours.
Harvesting: 120 hours adult male; 120 hours 13-year-old.
Total: 888 hours (approximately 4 months).

LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

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461 It is not claimed that these figures are anything but approximate, but they at least bring out the proportionate amount of work and show clearly the labour that can be undertaken by children in this agrarian community. [883] They reveal that a 13-year-old boy can contribute to almost two-thirds of the actual labour in the cultivation of the land (his solo contribution for the winter crop being 440 hours out of 720; and 536 hours out of 888 hours for the summer crop).

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[464] One can assess from the approximate figures the paramount importance of children as a non-salaried essential in the labour-force, especially in a community where hired labour is extremely difficult to get. Moreover, it is not difficult to appreciate the maxim that an early son is of great service. It is a part of filial piety for a son to be expected to perform all that is [519] within his capacity to relieve his father.[1] Thus from the economic point of view, a child's process of growing up connotes his father's gradual relinquishing of all the farm tasks he has been carrying out hitherto. One of the ideals of family life is for the children to do the things their parents have been doing before, as he who resembles his father has committed no injustice. This criterion is one of the elements involved in describing a boy or a girl as 'muaddab' or 'muaddabah'—disciplined. If the father has grown-up children to rely upon for work, this would [554] certainly enhance his social prestige, being able through more leisure to participate fully in the social events, mediations and informal gatherings as he can afford the time for them.

Children are thus considered to be leisure-giving to their parents; since a leisurely father is one who is not hard-pressed by work and usually designated as 'sheikh arab'. Yet sons sometimes resent the excessive indulgence of their fathers in this privilege, when they feel that they themselves are overworked, or when incited by their in-laws or 'pals' that they are working like a donkey while father is acting like 'a great arab sheikh, enjoying the shade and the councils'. In some cases, this might lead to son and father friction, which might result in the former quitting the village.

464 A few people in the village have land, but no sons. In connection with this, Ali remarked that this is one of the ways in which God tested his creatures, by not letting them have both land and sons. Such people have to get permanent hired labour for the cultivation of their land; and these are euphemistically dubbed 'participants'. The owner provides the animals, implements, and seeds for work, while the participants provide the labour, [465] receiving in return a quarter of the crop. Sometimes a part of the land is
427 let to a person, the owner having nothing to do with it, but receiving one-third, or sometimes one-half, of the total crop besides paying the tax.

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[554] The economic contribution of boys applies equally to girls in connection with the household work. Girls are expected to co-operate with mothers in domestic tasks, and, as they grow older, to be increasingly able to relieve their mothers so that the latter can widen their social activities and

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[1] See in this connection children's statements in the *Moral Ideology Test*, Appendix IX.

enjoy the pleasure and prestige of 'mothers of children'. Thus in the same 594
way, the girl, in relation to her mother, is not only considered as an 858
economic asset but a means for getting more leisure and freedom from the [554]
pressure of work.

It is appropriate here to state the various activities which both boys and 241
girls are expected to perform. Age and physical fitness determine the 857
various tasks allotted to them.

In the case of boys, farm work is divided into three main categories,
according to their ability to perform those duties independently. In the
first stage, from seven to ten years, the boy is called 'hawwal', meaning
that he can direct the water into the farm sections and is able to regulate [312]
by himself the process of irrigation. Twenty years ago, when the village
was under basin irrigation, boys who used to attend to the turning of the
water-wheel were called 'jaizar', but as there are very few water-wheels
nowadays, this word is not commonly used in connection with this stage.
Compulsory schooling for those who cannot evade it has made this job a
part-time one. 241

From the age of twelve or thirteen boys are expected to undertake the 883
conveying of fertilizer from the hills, and they are called at this stage
'marraga'—the bringers of 'marog'. They are trained by the age group that [868]
is immediately above them. A boy on his first 'hill ascent' to get the 'marog' [561]
must give the older boys with whom he is to be associated a present of
wheat, bread and dates. If he does not fulfil this obligation, they usually,
on their arrival at the 'marog' spot, undo the camel's reins and put them
round the boy's face and neck, returning the camel empty to the boy's
field. After fulfilling his obligation, they take him with them, and help him
to learn the techniques of loading the camel and discovering the best kind
of 'marog'.

At this stage also a boy starts tackling the 'shadoof' or as more commonly called in this district the 'ood'. If he can manipulate this instrument
properly the boy is called 'awwad'. It is well established that a 'marrag' [262]
or an 'awwad' is almost synonymous to a good eater, and his request for
food and the increase of frequency of meals and their quantity are usually [554]
complied with, as a recognition of his tangible economic contribution.

The third stage sets in by the appearance of the first traces of the boy's 241
moustache, when he becomes a fully-fledged farmer, 'nabbar' or a 'fellah', 885
from the age of seventeen onwards. The hallmark of this stage is for the
boy to be allowed to sow the seeds, and to distribute fertilizer on the farm,
as these are supposed to be the most skilful tasks in agriculture.

These three economic stages coincide almost with the three categories 561
of the social grouping in the village, namely the group of youngsters,
adolescents or non-married men, and fully-fledged men. One of the important qualifications for a grown-up marriageable youth is his ability to perform 581
the various stages of cultivation, graduating, as it were, by becoming
a competent farmer, able to sow the seeds and distribute the fertilizer.

LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

883 With regard to girls, there are no definite stages for female domestic
868 tasks, but it is well known that the last stage of learning in a girl's home
management skills is that connected with kneading and baking. The need
for mothers to let their daughters take over their tasks is not so acute as
with the fathers in relation to their sons. This is understandable, as the
554 son is socially the symbol of the family and his skills are to perpetuate the
family pattern of life.

The following is a detailed duty sheet of the farm and home tasks
857 expected from both boys and girls at different ages:

FROM THREE TO SEVEN

Boys

No serious tasks are expected till
the age of five, whereupon they are
required to work as messengers
fetching goods from the shop, or
running errands for their parents,
uncles, etc. . . . fetching and taking
things from and to other homes.
[202] Children (between five and seven)
are considered to be the best messengers, especially for invitations or
for asking help from neighbours,
and borrowing from them, being
less embarrassed, less inquisitive,
[312] and only repeating faithfully what
is told to them.

In the absence of older sisters
[372] he takes care of his younger brother
or sister.

Towards the end of this period he
[241] goes to the field with his older
siblings, or with his father, riding
behind him on donkey back or balanced in one of the camel's panniers.

Helps in carrying grass to the animals, scaring birds from the field, filling water-pots from the canal; ties or unties the cow, donkey and camel for his father or older brother.

On the whole for him this is a
[868] stage of observation without allotted specific responsibilities. As the
villagers put it, this is the period for
children 'to be moistened with earth'.

Girls

Care of infants is one of the girl's main tasks at all ages, and starts as early as five, when she takes her younger sibling outside for play, or attends to him while mother is doing some domestic task.

Runs errands like boys, especially for her mother or aunt, e.g. fetching fire, bringing food or other things that need to be hidden with the dangling parts of her head-cloth.

Accompanies mother to the well or to the Nile with her small pot or tin, carried on her head and supported by her lifted arms.

Helps mother in bringing fuel to the oven or the fire, consisting of millet stems, tree branches, dry animal dung, etc.

Makes her own loaf with the last bit of dough which she eats after it is baked. This is a means of her initiation to domestic tasks by being 'moistened with the dough', and a reminder that 'kneading and baking' are one of the most important jobs for a girl.

LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

[Boys] [GIRLS] 857

FROM SEVEN TO TWELVE[1]

Before the introduction of compulsory schooling and perennial irrigation, the specific responsibility for this period was irrigation—he still helps with it in the afternoon.

Collects leaves, clover, grass, and weeds for feeding the animals, takes animals to water, as tending animals is his main responsibility, whether at home or in the field.

Fetches drinking water on donkey-back.

Helps in harvesting.

Helps in digging land, breaking up clods with the hoe as an introduction to his use of implements.

Takes out and leads his blind or old father or grandfather.

Takes corn on donkey-back to the mill to be ground.

Tasks of previous period if no younger sibling in the family.

Establishment of tasks of preceding period, and helping mother in food preparation.

Fetches water from the Nile in a larger jar, as towards end of this period she can balance the filled jar on head without support of hands. [312] [482]

Takes midday meal to the field, and brings home dates and vegetables. [231]

Helps mother in attending to poultry and sheep, searches for straying sheep or chicken outside. [231]

Daughters of widowed women, or men who are not actually engaged in farming, gather fuel from along the roads. [868] [312]

Brings home 'clay' from the Nile or the field to help mother in building or repairing the oven, the pigeon-cote, the fireplace and the earthen store for seeds.

Carries corn on her head to the mill. [482]

FROM TWELVE TO SIXTEEN

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Fertilizer-fetching is the main responsibility. Father is responsible for the work on the land, while son is responsible for carrying fertilizer from the hill.

Rears with special attention animals allocated to him: calf, small camel . . . as an investment for his marriage-payment.

Makes ropes by twisting fibre of the palm trunk.

'Sea' is one of her main responsibilities, which means water-fetching from Nile mainly at night. [241]

Occasionally takes women's washing as well as her own to be washed in the Nile [296]

Sieves flour, sews and cooks. [231]

Heats the oven, kneads and bakes. [422]

Hair-delousing. [515]

Wool spinning and yarning.

Makes plate and dish covers out of palm leaves, and dolls to ornament her future house. [283] [285]

Errand-going decreases to the minimum.

May get married before sixteen. [582]

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[1] This is the period where compulsory schooling has interfered with the traditional activities of children. 871

LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

FROM SIXTEEN ONWARDS

[Boys]	[GIRLS]
885 Beginning of responsibility with [241] use of implements, e.g. plough, jarrafa, hoe, etc. . . . [837] Responsibility in sowing, thinning out plants, and fertilizer distribution. [285] Making 'maktafs', mats, panniers by plaiting palm leaves and sewing the plaits in the required shape.	All kinds of previously mentioned domestic work. Complete seclusion, whether married or not.

853 A concrete example of a sixteen-year-old boy's day of work, who has no brothers, is given in the following account:

'I am overworked, because there are no other "hands" to help me and my father in working on our land. I spend practically no time at home during the day as I am busy now fetching the fertilizer and have to rise at the crack of dawn, when the "muazzin" calls "Prayers are better than sleep". My mother packs bread and dates, and sometimes eggs, in a [264] handkerchief for my breakfast on the way to the hills. I am then ready with my camel, either to call on my neighbours or to be called on by them for the "fajriah"—the dawn load. On our way to the hills we partake of [492] our breakfast and sing songs on camelback. On our arrival at a good spot we make our camels kneel, and load the panniers, filling the "maktaf" with clay first, lifting it on the knee and emptying it into the panniers. The test for a good 'marrag' is to be able to do the lifting and emptying in a steady way, maintaining a balance in the loads. Then we make our camels rise, and, following them, we go on to the fields. After the first load, we go back for a reload called "dihawiah"—the full beginning of the day (about ten o'clock). Meanwhile, my father prepares grass for the camel, or engages in irrigating the land. After the second load, I take my [264] midday meal at home, and go for a third load of fertilizer, called "asriah" (about three o'clock in the afternoon). If I don't go for the afternoon load, I help my father in distributing fertilizer for some time, then I would take the camel home, laden with grass, at sunset, whereas my father follows me later with the cow.

'Of course my work becomes easier when the fertilizer-fetching season finishes. I then can enjoy my tea in the morning, go to the field at broad daybreak, and attend to the feeding of the cow and the camel, or irrigate [264] the land. In the evenings I am not too tired to have a chat with my friends [574] after the evening meal, or to pay visits to my relatives.'

It is quite obvious from the preceding discussion that the welfare of the 594 family depends largely on the labour potential it has at its disposal, and the harmonious distribution of that labour. One of the main features in the economic activities in the village is that immediately the younger child develops to the stage where he can take over the tasks carried on by an

older sibling, he is expected to do so, and take his turn. So practically every 594
grown-up member of the family goes through almost the same farming
stages and hence there is no specialization in any particular farm task.
Friction sometimes occurs between brothers, because of gaps in this pro-
cess of training, as in the case of a brother who has been working in town
at an early age returning to the village to work with his family. He would
resent, for instance, fetching the fertilizer from the hill, while his older
brother might expect him to take over this task. In the same way, boys
who had been sent by their fathers to the Kuttab to memorize the Koran
till the age of fourteen or fifteen would find it difficult to adapt themselves
to the cycles of agricultural work. In a few cases the performing of the
appropriate tasks according to age and ability has led fathers to give each
of their married sons a separate piece of land to cultivate for himself, as
if they were leasing the land, the father getting one-third of the crop.

In spite of the fact that between the ages of five and twelve there is a 857
certain amount of overlapping in the tasks of both boys and girls in the 462
home, yet the sexual dichotomy in work is definitely established about the
age of twelve. Even at an earlier stage, when the girl takes the food to the
field or takes a basketful of grass to the sheep, she is only allowed to remain
at the edge of it by the canal. If she ever entertains the idea of touching [562]
the implements or playing with the water, her father or brothers immedi-
ately shout at her 'Leave it! Get off the land or away from the water!'
After the age of thirteen, the girls' errands are confined to the neighbour- 883
hood and they work more inside the dwelling. They are encouraged to go
out for water-fetching only after sunset, when all men have returned home 462
from work. The agricultural road leading from the village to the Nile is
monopolized at night, specially on moonlit nights, by adolescent girls and
women going to the Nile to fill their water-jars.

In discussing the productive activities in the village, the incentives for 261
work must be mentioned. It is hardly necessary to stress the fact that the [461]
drive for food, and for sufficient supply of it, is one of the basic motives
for work. With the small landholdings there is hardly any other alternative
but to grow crops which yield the major substance of their food consump-
tion, bread, whether wheat, barley or millet, constituting the bulk of
food intake in any meal. It is believed that bread made out of home-grown
crops is more lasting and sufficing than that made out of seeds bought at [778]
the market, as there is more 'baraka'—holiness and sufficiency—in the
former kind. Even those few farmers with comparatively large-sized farms
who have recently taken up the cultivation of cash crops like cotton and
sugar-cane, still reserve the major part of their land for corn. Security of
food supply depends on growing seeds as the only way of subsistence.
'From where are you going to eat?' is a question invariably asked by the
villagers of any of them who entertains the idea of growing cotton on his
small farm.

As it is, the various crops have different security and prestige values/

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

261 attached to them. Millet is the source of food for almost eight months,
[262] extending from September to April. The same applies to barley, which is
the food crop during summer. Wheat bread is a delicacy enjoyed now and
again, and usually connected with festival and religious occasions. It is
also the crop that provides mainly the substance, with the addition of
[431] chicken or pigeons, of mutual food gifts on events of marriage, birth and
circumcision, as well as the bread that is to be offered to guests. It is also
wheat that is normally sold in the market, or exchanged for goods in the
[437] shop. Hence the season for weddings and circumcision ceremonies falls
only after the harvest of wheat, when it is abundant in the village. More
than in any other seed, the villagers are deeply interested in the price of
[521] wheat. The price of wheat is the first topic a villager returning from town
will discuss with his people who will be all too eager to listen. In an often-heard argument between a cloth-merchant and a farmer, the latter, in
[437] attempting to reduce the price of the cloth, will retort to the merchant,
'Do you know how much wheat is worth?'

In connection with food, the writer recalls a tentative suggestion to one of the villagers that one could have a meal without bread, to which the horrified man immediately replied, 'There is no Strength, nor Might save with Allah! May God preserve this bliss for us.' He then enquired how one could get filled without bread. 'Certainly, bulkiness is one of the main things in a satisfactory meal, and nothing is more filling than loaves of bread.'

778 Bread is not only filling, but also possesses an aura of sacredness, being
believed to be the essence of life. The name given to bread is 'aish' which
261 literally means life. It is profane to put bread on the ground, and every
effort must be made to pick up any crumb that falls to the ground for
fear of it being trodden on.[1] Bread, like written words on paper, which
might contain something from the Koran, must be respected. Before
mother sweeps the house, children go looking for pieces or crumbs of
bread or bits of paper with writing on them, and either give them to birds
or goats in the former case or put them in the fire in the case of paper.
Children are also enjoined to kiss bread if it falls from their hands on the
[869] ground, and if they find it lying in the street to remove it into a crevice
in the wall. They are punished if they throw bread from their hands when
angry or annoyed, as this might make the 'baraka' fly from the house.

626 Another deep incentive for work is the desire to emulate and attract
social approval. The belief of the villager that nobody, at least in his
[461] village, is intrinsically better than any other person, gives him a feeling
[554] that all are equal. The strength of the impulse for emulation is clearly
expressed in some of their often-repeated maxims: 'Without emulation
the world would not have been populated and developed', 'Even com-

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[1] Something similar to this has been mentioned by E. W. Lane, which he describes as 'The excessive and unreasonable respect of the Egyptians for bread', *Manners and Customs*, p. 290.

mitting adultery is motivated by emulation', 'Make your harvest look 626
big, otherwise your enemies will rejoice'.[1]

The pride in the family unity and name is associated with its labour on [594]
the land. One can see the effect of the driving motive of emulation in the
appearance of the outer sections nearer to the road or to the canal. Special
attention is always given to these sections, as they are usually the most
elevated and best cultivated sections of the land. The main ideal for which
every family strives is to be 'mastourah', which literally means to be
covered, or, in other words, to be balanced and publicly approved and
not exposed to outside shaming. The special attention given to the outer
sections of the field would at least rid the farmer of shame, if the rest of his
field were not properly cultivated. Esteem and honour are accorded by the [554]
villagers to those who have made a success of their farming, and this is [156]
usually mixed up with a feeling of envy. To be an industrious farmer
attending to his business is a good qualification for a youth about to get [581]
married, while slothfulness militates against his chances. Parents stimulate
their sons of marriageable age to work hard as an incentive for their
marriage as early as possible.

In a discussion of livelihood in the village, an evaluation of the standard 121
of living is a necessary step for the full appreciation of the villagers' life.
It has been made clear by anthropologists that the standard of living is
not only a matter of production and consumption, but equally depends on
the cultural values that govern these processes. 'In no society do we find
people consuming whatever comes to hand or producing the minimum
necessary for existence with the least possible effort. Man is a rational
being, and hence there are reasons to be discovered for his choice of food
and clothing and for the efforts which he makes to produce the objects of
his choice.'[2] These cultural premises are implicit in every society, determining, to a great extent, the ways in which individuals handle their 'material
culture'.[3]

In the previous pages reference has been made to some of the social 556
incentives for work, but accumulation of wealth has not been included. [461]
For contentment with what one possesses, as predestined by God, is the
keyn[illegible] of the villagers' happiness. In some dwellings and guest houses
this ideal is written on the wall, 'Contentment is an inexhaustible treasure'.
One should not amass wealth, but should spend it in pious acts, otherwise,
according to the Koran, as Ali recited, 'With the gold and silver a man
accumulates he would be seared on the forehead, on the side, and on the

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[1] A popular story is told about a jealous farmer whose neighbour enquired from him
about the amount of fertiliser he distributed in every section (hod). He told him that he [577]
usually put two basketfuls; and thus the neighbour followed his advice. But later on the
latter found that his cultivation was not as good as that of the farmer, and discovered
that it was due to the fact that his neighbour used to distribute three baskets, and not two
as he had told him.

[2] Margaret Read, *Native Standards of Living and the African Culture Change*, p. 11.

[3] For a quantitative assessment of the standard of living in Silwa, see Appendix III.

556 back'. He added that the prophetic tradition runs that if people are contented,
God will look after them as He looks after the birds that leave their
[779] nests on feeling hungry and return to them well satisfied. Another prophetic
tradition maintains that there are two types of people whose hunger
[554] is never satisfied, the searcher for knowledge and the searcher for wealth,
and while the first is praised the second is condemned. This does not mean
that the Koran or the prophetic tradition encourages apathy, as one can
quote other statements conducive to hard work. But the mere fact that
the statements, related by Ali and uttered by a great number of the literate
[777] villagers, are those exalting contentment, asceticism and submission to
fate, to the exclusion of any others, shows a kind of selectivity in values
entertained by the villagers. The writer was struck, however, by the
amount of frugality and economic calculations of the villagers, in spite
of their being frequently dubbed as fatalists. Their fatalism is usually a
justification for the misfortune that befalls them, as epitomized by their
saying, 'What is written on the forehead, must be seen by the eye'. On
the other hand, they have another maxim saying that 'If one's back itches,
there's nothing like one's finger to scratch it and give comfort'. Contentment
thus actually means satisfaction with what one can get without the undue
strain of striving to get ahead or the strenuous efforts for satisfying
numerous material demands. It would be very difficult, with the fellah's
simple tools and the sweat involved in his work, to convince him that his
lot could be improved by more work. 'Both attitudes—contentment and
acquisitiveness—have their own social context. Contentment is adopted
in a close economy; acquisitiveness in an expanding economy. Without
economic opportunities the striving for material gain is a disturbance to
existing order, since it means the plunder of wealth from others. Whatever
form this plunder may take, it is a curse to the common man. Therefore,
to accept and be satisfied with the social role and material rewards given
by the society is essential. But when economic opportunity develops
through the development of technology, and when wealth can be acquired
through exploitation of nature instead of through the exploitation of man,
the doctrine of contentment becomes reactionary because it restricts
individual initiative.'[1]

The attitude of contentment manifests itself also in those villagers who
work in towns, for immediately they feel that they have enough money
[464] to last them for some time, they return to the village to live amongst their
people till they run short of money, whereupon they return to the town.

Contentment as a value, however, does not, of course, prevent the
476 villagers from looking at things and acts in economic terms. Even the
welter of their formal and informal social contacts has an economic significance.
Help given to friends and relatives is a debt which is expected
to be returned, in spite of the magnanimous phrases associated with its
rendering, such as 'There is no calculation between us' or 'It makes no
difference between friends'.

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[1] H. Fei and C. Chang, *Earthbound China*, London, 1949, p. 84.

difference between friends'. Moreover, economic pressure can be brought 000 626 to produce social conformity and curb the heretic. In the case of a shopkeeper whose private life was open to suspicion, he found that his customers had gradually deserted him, and he had to search for work in town. Part of the village efforts to establish a new mill were provoked not only by the raising of the charges by the owners, but also by the fact that one of them had been accused of fomenting intrigues between the villagers. This added fuel to the mill's campaign 'to ruin the house of such a man'.

No study of the fellah's nutrition and its connection with cultural values 146 has been made. The following remarks about diet in Silwa are appropri- 261 ate; they are, however, inadequate as such a question requires a special enquiry by itself.

The villager has no concept of a balanced diet apart from a filling or a delicious meal. Meals, especially dinners, are often better provided after the reaping of the new harvest when food would be plentiful, and meat could be bought, while gradually the meals become poorer and meat is rarely served. It is said that 'one good meal a year is a support like a stick' in justifying one expensive meal whenever possible. Moreover, bread is 262 always preferred to be hot, 'just coming from the oven', which means an [594] arduous task to the housewives, as the provision of cooked food is an important part of their matrimonial duties. One of my female relatives told me that she knows of two cases where a husband had to divorce his wife because she seldom provided him with freshly-baked bread or hot [586] 'ghamoos'—a cooked vegetable in which he can dip the bread.

The preparation and cooking of a meal is associated largely with certain 251 kinship and neighbourly obligations. Relatives might help each other in 602 picking the odd stones or foreign matter from the seeds before sending them 621 to the mill, help in sieving the flour or in baking. If a woman bakes her bread in a hot oven of a neighbour (a device for saving fuel), she has to offer one of the children a loaf of bread. Neighbours and relatives might [426] borrow loaves of bread from a woman who has just baked. After baking, a woman may send a loaf or loaves of bread to a widowed relative or send a 'dwaga'—bread to be tasted—from the newly-harvested crop.

As a rule, the villagers take three meals a day—breakfast (fatour), 264 lunch (ghada), and an evening meal, at sunset (asha). But farmers occasionally eat between the meals anything available, which they call 'ijalla', i.e. the food that does not precipitate the next meal.

An evening meal, especially a well-prepared one, is certainly the apex 264 of the day's work, the reward and joy for the day's efforts and toil.[1] The 594 gathering round the table—'tablia'—for the evening meal, reflects the family unity, its hierarchy, and its discipline. The father and the children sit on the mat or on the bed round the low table to eat from one dish. If there is meat, it is the father who distributes it, giving each child his or her share, a larger portion to the older boys and less to the younger, and the

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[1] For such feeling and attitude towards food, see R. Firth, *We, The Tikopia*, p. 33.

264 girls, on the whole, getting less than the boys. Young girls may eat at their
594 father's table, but after the age of twelve, sex dichotomy is established in
[562] food, and the female members of the family eat afterwards.

The meal usually starts with the invocation, 'In the name of God, the
[788] Beneficent, the Merciful', and ends by every participant's saying 'Praise to God'. The father, as the disciplinarian, watches to see if any child shows signs of greed or wasting food by dropping it, whereupon he has to ask him to control himself, saying, 'Oh boy! Why don't you say in the name of God?' If the child continues to be careless or rude, he might be hit or given less share of the meat or his share might be given to one of his more disciplined brothers. Generally speaking, children are expected to be silent and obedient at meals. A child's complaint about food is not tolerated as such a complaint removes 'baraka'.

The end of more pretentious meals, especially on festival occasions,
796 always witnesses the family's remembrance of its deceased members, when
769 the father asks all the members present to recite the 'Fatiha' from the Koran for the souls of the dead. The eve of the two religious feasts Ramadan and Adha is called Rahamat—mercy, where practically every family prepares a good meal at the end of which they ask God to have mercy on their deceased. On the morning of the feast-days, the womenfolk make special wheat bread, which they take to eat or distribute among children or whoever is present at the cemetery, asking them to read the Fatiha for their dead.

574 Hospitality is shown by offering an excessive amount of food. In case of guests, the table or tray is arranged with loaves of bread all round, no gaps being left. The guests should be made to feel that there is an abundance of food and 'ghamoos', and should be encouraged all the time to eat by saying, 'Go ahead; do your best; try more of this', and so on. The etiquette of hospitality is that while the guest must show a kind of restraint, the host must be always persuading him to carry on. The host must also apologize for not being able to provide the right quantity and quality of food for the occasion, saying, 'May our affection cover up the deficiency in the meal'.

264 There is no doubt that the partaking of food is one of the main forces
621 bringing about or reinforcing relationship between members of this com-
[628] munity and between them and other neighbouring villages. 'There is bread and salt between us' is a strong binding moral force between two people or two families, and to betray bread and salt is almost a sin, which is punishable either in this world or in the next. The commensalism of the clan-meals in the breaking of the daily fast during the whole month of Ramadan, breakfast on the mornings of the two feasts and on funeral days is a reminder of, and contributor to, group solidarity. Boys who carry their fathers' trays of food are usually exchanged, and sent to eat at another man's tray.

[241] At the beginning of the fresh harvest, a special meal is provided by

269

neighbours in the field, where a small lamb or goat is killed in the field 62]
and cooked, on this occasion, by the men, while the women send the [241]
children with bread to the farm for the meal. It must be noticed that on this occasion, as well as at most communal meals, meat is served in one dish and is divided by one member or two amongst the participants. Such a meal will be followed by somebody standing up to invoke God's blessing [788]
—'baraka'—in the new harvest, as well as mercy on the deceased ancestors. Indeed Robertson Smith's remark is applicable to this community. 'The [578]
act of eating and drinking together is the solemn and stated expression of the fact that all who share the meal are brethren and that the duties of friendship and brotherhood are implicitly acknowledged in their common act.'[1]

To sum up, the village is a community of small landowners, who, irrespective 621
of the size of their holdings, consider their land to be the basis of 423
their livelihood and security and to be a possession for which they have great emotional attachment. There is no appreciable functional differentiation 463
in occupations; hence, the amount of skill and knowledge required for livelihood is almost identical. In spite of a great deal of economic self-sufficiency in the peasant or rural community, and of reliance on 439
subsistence crops, the inhabitants are still dependent on outside forces for the price of their crops and for the sale of manufactured goods and textiles. Moreover, with a population pressure, more and more of the 369
village members have reluctantly left to seek livelihood in towns and [164]
cities and to take up work as caretakers and domestic servants. On their return to the village, such groups of people bring with them some of the town atmosphere, considering themselves 'masrawia' (been to the city). They sometimes consider themselves more refined, and are usually elegantly dressed, even adopting a different accent. Such mobility is definitely beginning to challenge in some measure the traditional stability and conventional behaviour.

In spite of the increasingly impinging forces of city life and the admiration 182
of the villagers for city ways, the small landowners still uphold and maintain the vested common interest in favour of the traditional ways of life, symbolized in the dignity of farm-work compared to other occupations, in the importance of family unity and honour of ancestry, in the religious ethic based on contentment and abhorrence of pleasure-seeking, and in social sensitivity to shame-provoking situations.

Furthermore, the feeling of equalitarianism is so striking in this community [554]
that any schematic class-division is very difficult to apply to its social structure. Here again, irrespective of their landholdings, they all [262]
eat from their hand produce consisting mainly of bread and the same varieties of home-grown vegetables; they live in similar dwellings, built [342]
of stone, dried mud and palm trunks, constructed by the village masons

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[1] W. Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*, London, 1894, p. 265.

182 and evidencing practically no difference in architecture, style or number of
[342] storeys, as there are no two-storey houses in the village. Members of each
sex dress more or less alike, and the observing of this convention is a very
183 important factor in social equality. Their maxim in this connection is
291 'Eat what you yourself like, but dress according to what others like'. Yet
all this does not mean that they are entirely identical, and the differences
are usually in quantity and not in kind. The headman of the village—
'Omda'—may have more clothes than others, but his clothes are the same
[622] type of clothes tailored in the same style; he may have a larger house than
his neighbour but both are built in the same style with the same kind of
[554] furniture, the same sanitary arrangements and cooking facilities. The
villagers do not divide themselves into 'the rich' and 'the poor'. Strengthening
this sense of equalitarianism are the kinship ties where all the members
of the village are inextricably connected with each other by family ties
and obligations, this being reinforced by the sense of brotherhood amongst
Moslems as enjoined upon them by the Koran.

858 With respect to the position of children in the village, they are certainly
464 considered as an economic asset from the age of five. They constitute the
labour-force in a community where hired labour is very difficult to procure.
With not many expenses needed for their upbringing, and with the tangible
labour they undertake, the burden of rearing children is offset; for
although they are consumers, they are, even more so, contributors to the
family resources. Children are also a means of providing parents with
leisure and prestige, and every new child provides his or her older sibling
with more opportunities for respite and leisure. Their economic contributions
are enlisted by a gradual process of training, first through actual
help in the farm activities, this being followed by the assignment of specific
tasks to them, according to their age and physical abilities.

423 It must also be emphasized that these conditions and attitudes obtain
in a village of small landholders. It is a matter for enquiry to find whether
the same conditions prevail in villages where large-size ownership of the
'landed gentry' is the basis of economic life. It must be remembered that
distribution of land in Egypt shows a great deal of unevenness. Out of
5,857,258 feddans of cultivable land in 1942, 2,160,219 feddans were
owned by 12,103 persons out of the total number of owners amounting to
2,550,579. Of these owners 93 per cent held less than 5 feddans each and
were in possession of only 31 per cent of the land. In 1939, owners of
plots over 20 feddans constituted but 1·5 per cent of the total number of
landowners, and these possessed just over 50 per cent of the total land.[1]

This system of land ownership in Egypt has nothing to do with legal
Islamic institutions, apart from the Islamic law of inheritance. Such maldistribution
of land is mainly due to the Ottoman regime and the reign
[656] of Muhammad Ali. The Land Code of 1858 and Land Registration Law of

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[1] See *Pocket Census of Egypt*, 1948. Wendell Cleland, 'A Population Plan for Egypt', in *L'Egypte Contemporaine*, 1939.

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1859 required that land in the villages be entered in the Government Land Register. This enforcement of registration resulted in many head clans, or village sheikhs (headmen) entering as much as they could of the village land as their property; in other cases, many owners had to abandon their land for fear of taxation.[1]

Moreover the great stretches of land recovered by Muhammad Ali and his successors were given over tax free to some wealthy notables and foreigners, and this group constitutes part of the big landowners in Egypt at present.[2]

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[1] Alfred Bonne, *State and Economics in the Middle East*, London, 1948.

[2] It must be noted here that after the completion of this work, the system of land ownership in Egypt has undergone radical change, a measure which was overdue for the establishment of the foundations of social justice. The abdication of ex-King Farouk and the seizure of power by the Army in July 1952 marked a new era in the life of the country. The new regime made land reform a central issue in its programme and passed the Law of Agrarian Reform. This law decreed that no landowner should possess more than 200 acres. Large estates over this size are to be expropriated with reasonable compensation for the owners. The expropriated land is to be distributed over a period of five years to landless villagers, to agricultural workers and to farmers with holdings less than five acres. For the full text of the law, see R. el-Barrawy, *The Military Coup in Egypt*, Cairo, 1952.

Chapter Two

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY

SOCIAL GROUPINGS

121 By 'social organization' here is meant the relations between social groups which have a certain ordered arrangement in the community. This is usually called by most anthropologists 'social structure'. We shall deal not only with the expected or ideal pattern of relations between the groups or the individuals, but also with their realization in concrete social behaviour. As Malinowski has emphasized, one must not only consider the 'charter' of the institutions and their traditional norms governing human conduct; it is equally important to study the real activities which may differ from the prescribed expectations owing to specific social pressure.[1] Moreover, 'social organization' will also include the 'social controls' that maintain 'law and order in the community' as well as the religious and magical sanctions which serve to validate social action.

592 [162] In Silwa, the family is the basic social unit around which the individual's life is centred. According to the official statistics, there are 1,223 families in Silwa Bahari, with an average of four persons to each family. In Arabic, the word family (aila) literally means the social unit that supports its members. In Silwa, the words for family and household (bait) are sometimes interchangeably used. [596] Ideally, the minimum personnel of the family comprises parents, unmarried children and married sons with their wives. There are, however, many other variations on this pattern, e.g. a conjugal family with a son-in-law, with the husband's sister who is a widow, with the husband's paternal nephew or niece who is an orphan, or with a paternal cousin. One can safely say that the composition of the members of a household constituting a family is mainly determined by the patrilineal principle, an emphasis which lies at the root of the family in Silwa. The position of such a family depends on property and ownership of land, as it is the main factor that makes the family live in one household. A widowed sister lives with her married brother if she transfers to him her property of 000 land or at least allows him to till it. As married boys can have no property

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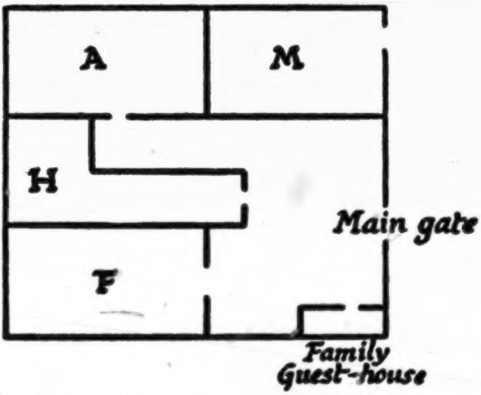
[1] B. Malinowski, *A Scientific Theory of Culture*, pp. 52–3.

As married boys can have no property

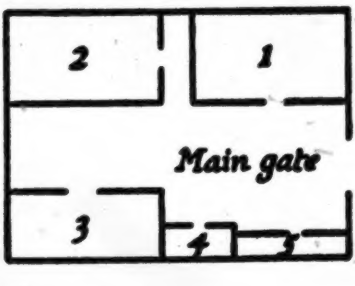
of their own as long as their father is alive, they have to live and work with him. Whether two married brothers with their families form one family living in one household, depends on whether they work co-operatively on the land after their father's death or whether they divide it. The family as an economic unit is identified with its common entrance to the house. This entrance must be distinguished from many houses which have a single main gate behind which there are other entrances. The main gate could be identified with the extended family whose members no longer form an economic unit. 592 596

The following sketch illustrates a typical example of a compound of an extended family. 596



X, the father of A, M and F and the grandfather of H, was the owner of this house site. After his death the two brothers M and A, their sister F and their nephew H wanted to divide their inheritance. During their prolonged quarrel over the land, they divided the house amongst them. As M was so annoyed with his brother A he decided not to enter the house from the same door A used, and built a separate entrance for himself. A, H and F, although constituting separate economic family units, still share the same main entrance and the compound is referred to as X's house. [578]

The following household forms one economic unit in spite of the different members composing it. 592



1 represents the part of the head of the family with his unmarried children; 2 represents his mother and his widowed sister who have both transferred their land to the head of the family; 3 represents his half-sister, who is also a widow and has a young

592 daughter; 4 his son and wife; 5 place reserved for animals. In this case, the half-sister has not transferred her share of land to her brother but rents it to him.

596 There is no institutionalized economic co-operation between the members of an extended family, if they are not living in one house. If they are on good terms, economic mutual assistance in borrowing money, animals, or crops may take place. Indeed it is significant that the extended family is not resorted to as much for economic help as has been expected. The economic strength of the extended family and the harmonious relationships between its members are not what is usually assumed by writers on social affairs in Egypt.[1]

However, the unity of the extended family is expected in questions related to public and formal occasions. The extended family is publicly responsible for the general conduct and certain disciplinary measures to redress the offences of its members against law and order, as we shall see later. Members of the extended family are also expected to render support to each other on occasions of offering hospitality, at circumcision, wedding [613] or funeral ceremonies. On the whole, the extended family could be regarded as an intermediate social unit between the conjugal economic family and the clan, shouldering the social responsibility for the smaller units and held accountable for their behaviour before the clan. It is only on the social level of public issues that public opinion in the village considers the family as a nucleus of blood relatives surrounded by a fringe of spouses.[2]

613 The extended families merge into the clan, and the village is composed 616 of nine clans (kabail), each tracing its descent in the patrilineal line to one common ancestor. Further, the nine clans are grouped in two main sections (hissa), each section belonging to a common progenitor, the two progenitors being brothers. One section is called 'Onab related to 'On, the brother of Mousa who is the progenitor of the Musiab section. The 'Onab section is divided into five clans, named: Diabab, Hasaballab, M'alliab, Waznab and Gharamab, whilst the Musiab is divided into four clans called: Marazik, 'Atamni, 'Amrab and Brahimab.[3]

616 It is locally accepted that each section represents half the population of the village, with the majority of the Musiab having their residence in the northern part, while the majority of the 'Onab reside mainly in the southern part. Between the two sections there is complete freedom of intermarriage

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[1] The writer is under the impression, from his general observation, that the extended family seems to be stronger and more effective as an economic unit amongst big landowning families as distinct from what obtains in Silwa, a community of small landowners.

[2] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man*, p. 159.

[3] Ab, the termination of the names of these clans, according to C. G. Seligman and Brenda Seligman, cannot be the Arabic ab—father. The suffix is common among the Beja tribal names. 'The Kababish, a Sudan Arab Tribe', *Harvard African Studies*, Vol. II, 1918, footnote, p. 113.

and social exchange. Each of the two sections is supposed to be characterized by certain attributes; the Musiab being renowned for their boasting and self-pride, and heavy-built members, while the 'Onab are reputed to be comparatively stingy and much inclined to gossip. 616

There are no formal heads of clans but there are natural leaders who are spontaneously appointed on occasions from the oldest members. The distinctive hallmark of every clan is its guest house, where the adult members of the clan have their communal meals during the fasting month of Ramadan, receive a common guest, settle disputes, meet for ordinary gossip and can celebrate their feasts, ceremonies and funerals. On one hand, the clans are aware of their integral identity; and on the other hand, they are aware that they are linked together by a common ancestor forming the unity of the village. 613

Silwa Kibli (Southern Silwa) and its neighbouring villages are inhabited by the descendants of 'Ayyash the third brother of 'On and Musa. This genealogical relationship is the explanation given to the similarities in customs and traditions between the two parts of Silwa Kibli and Silwa Bahari. 619 63 184 [829]

The genealogical pattern goes on to repeat itself still further to include and explain the relations and similarities in the larger socio-geographic region extending throughout the whole province. Apart from the towns 'where people are mixed', most of the villages of this region are inhabited by either the G'afra or 'Ababda. While the G'afra are the descendants of G'afar al-Sadik whose great-grandfather was the grandson of the Prophet, the 'Ababda are the descendants of 'Abdullah ibn al-Zubair who belonged to the Kuraish clan, the Prophet's clan, but was not so close in kinship or favour to the Prophet. The G'afra consider themselves more hospitable than the 'Ababda; and they are also distinguishable as farmers, while the 'Ababda, even if they are farmers at present, were originally camel-drivers.

Moreover the G'afra region is divided into two parts: those villages lying along the eastern bank of the Nile are descendants of Bahr (amongst whose sons were 'On, Musa and 'Ayyash), while those stretching along the western bank of the Nile are the descendants of Buhair, the brother of Bahr. The diagram overleaf represents the ramification of kinship in the region of G'afra and Silwa. [361]

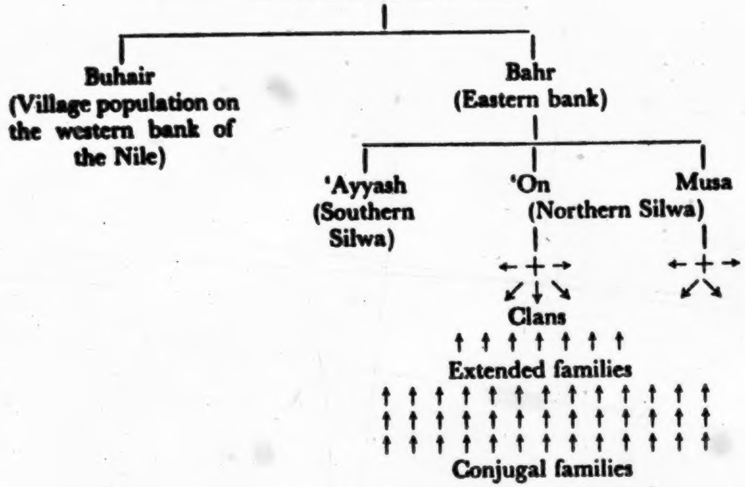
It is clear from this that not only the village, but the whole region represents a ramified genealogical tree, having one main trunk. It is also significant that this ramification is related to the branching off of brothers who were not in agreement, e.g. in the division of East and West in the whole region, in the division of the two parts of Silwa (South and North) and in the division of Silwa itself into two sections. This could be taken as a recognition of a deep-seated cultural expectation of brothers' discord, in spite of the highly idealized expectation of fraternal solidarity. [593]

The genealogical pattern, based on the unilateral descent, repeats itself

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY

The genealogical pattern, based on the unilateral descent, repeats itself
621 with diminishing range throughout the social structure of the village down
to the smallest unit. The village is divided into two parts, each of which is
subdivided into clans, and these in turn are composed of a number of
extended families.[1] The whole structure of the village, as well as that of the
619 whole socio-geographic region of G'afra, could be likened to a centrifugal
mechanism spreading out and out in ever-widening circles. Certain common structural norms of behaviour permeate the various segments of the centrifugal structure, manifesting themselves in varying degrees and in different circumstances.[2]

THE G'AFRA DESCENT TREE



596 Pride of belonging to a particular family, especially more obvious in the
186 circle of the extended family, reflects itself in one's pride in the clan, the
section, the village, and in the holy descent of the G'afra stock. In the case
of extended families, pride manifests itself in possessing a common horse
which runs in races held on the celebration of saintly occasions, in having
a name for hospitality, or for scholarship and piety. Pride of clan is linked
613 with activities in the guest house, or co-operation in digging a well. Pride
616 in one's section is revealed on communal celebrations especially during the
186 celebration of the Prophet's birthday; each section proclaiming that it has
carried it out in a more spectacular manner as each usually has its 'marquee' for listening to the recital of Koran and mawals (popular songs). At
619 the level of the G'afra as such, the sense of pride reveals itself in their holy
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[1] See Nadel, 'Beni-Amer. Society', *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 1, 44.

[2] The word 'structural' here is used in the sense employed by Bateson to denote standardised details of behaviour. *Naven*, p. 25.

619

ancestry. Marriage outside the stock must be with those who can claim an 186
equally holy descent.

The second important norm that governs the whole social structure is 594
the weight and respect given to, and the authority wielded by, the person 596
who plays the role of the senior, normally chosen on age basis as well as
on capacity to speak and argue well, besides other factors such as economic 613
status and social prestige. This pattern which, in the smallest unit, is the 623
authority of the father is extended to the oldest capable member of the 554
extended family, to the head of the clan, and to the village councils that
congregate spontaneously, having no formal composition.

The third aspect which asserts itself in the various units of the social 156
structure is the feeling of fellowship. The individual finds himself consciously or unconsciously merged into the group. Starting in this case with 619
the largest unit of G'afra as a whole, one is not surprised to find that no
elaborate electioneering campaign is required to persuade the G'afra 666
villages to vote for the candidate who belongs to their stock. In fact, the same candidate for Silwa constituency (including the town of Edfu) has won the last three elections with a sweeping majority, irrespective of the political views of his opponents. Throughout the whole of Silwa region, the opposing candidate had never secured more than a hundred votes out of at least three thousand. The rule is that the people of Silwa should vote for their 'paternal cousin'. Yet in the last elections another candidate from the G'afra, the official holder of the ancestry register and a religious man whose grandfather was the leader in the mystic order of the village, stood for the elections to compete with the previous member.[1] The reason for that, I was told, is that they once had a heated argument as to whose father was the more respected and honoured man amongst the G'afra. It was also generally believed that the new candidate was encouraged by the 'Ababda. The G'afra split their votes between the two, neither thereby winning the elections. This is strong evidence that kinship relations, and not party politics, decide the issue of the elections in this community.

On the clan level, the sentiment of fellowship shows itself in all the 613
activities connected with the guest house. Suppose a distinguished guest 574
has come to the guest house, e.g. a well-known religious man, or a man with social prestige from a neighbouring town; it is not only one man who receives him, but as many as possible of the heads of the extended families of the clan; and he might be invited by more than one clan. The money for the slain ram (dabiha) is collected from the heads of the families and called 'firda'-spread. The meal is cooked, each family providing its bread; meat and vegetables are provided from the 'common pot', and then they take their round trays to the guest house. The same happens with tea. Clan fellowship takes place during the night entertainments that are held

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[1] In Silwa there is a strong connection between political authority and religious authority. This theme has been brought out clearly in E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, O.U.P., 1949.

613 during the month of Ramadan, when families co-operate in providing the
574 'Koran reciter' as well as other guests with tea and food.

Identification with the clan sentiment shows itself in cases of murder,
613 where the clans of both the murderer and the murdered are involved. It is
682 the obligation of the father, son, brother, uncle or paternal cousin to call
627 for vengeance and for the clan to support him, either by claiming compensation (which, however, is seldom accepted if the claim is acknowledged) or by counter-murder, as the Koran ordains that murder should be
[779] punished with murder. The two clans through the mediation of another clan have to settle the dispute by deciding the compensation, called 'dia'.

156 This is no Durkheimian merging of the individual into the group. It is simply a statement of the compelling moral law that the individual, to be in line with the group, should express group-sympathy; if the group is angry, he should be angry, if it is insulted, he must feel that he is insulted.

182 This pattern of social structure does not apply merely to the Silwa community and the G'afra, but applies in varying degrees to the whole province of Aswan, and many other provinces that are known to the writer in Upper Egypt. In all this, the bond of common descent and family connections is one of the strongest factors as well as the most socially effective force in the social structure.

561 The village could also be classified into social groups on the basis of age. From the standpoint of age there are three broad social groupings. The first is referred to as 'youngsters' (jahhal), including all boys and girls up to the age of twelve or thirteen years. The second is the unmarried group (fityan), and the third is represented by the married adults, referred to as 'men or women'.

In public there is no free mixing between these three categories as it is considered 'impolite' for a youngster to sit with men, for example, and the converse would be shameful. Youngsters can only be seen in an adult gathering serving tea, or holding the ablution laver and ewer, or as
[291] messengers. In the case of young boys, they are marked by their head cap, while unmarried boys wear a turban, and the men besides a turban wear a 'tob' which is a black outer garment, and usually carry a stick or a stave.

Apart from segregation and dress, the age criterion shows itself in out-
561 ward behaviour, by considering the older people as equivalent to the
888 paternal uncle, or as fathers, or grandfathers if they are very old. Often older people are addressed by the kinship term 'Ammy' (O my paternal uncle), especially if one wants to be 'polite'. If one does not use the kinship
[576] term one has to address the older person by the title 'Sheikh' preceding his first name.

Sex is another criterion for two definite social groups: the world of men,
562 and the world of women. In this community it is unthinkable to have free mixing between the two worlds, or that a thing done by one sex can also be done by a member of the other sex. Men have their scope of activities either in the fields or outside the compound, the women are mainly con-

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954

MR13 Feilahin MR13

Silwa

fined to their homes. A man who does not frequently mix with his fellow 562
men outside the house is branded as the 'man of the oven', while a woman
who continually leaves her house is called 'strayer' Men meet for their [591]
spontaneous gathering and gossip outside the house, while women meet
inside. While women are expected to adorn themselves with earrings, nose [301]
rings, kohl for the eyes, finger rings, anklets, henna for the palms (almost [302]
an ornament for every sense), men are supposed to refrain. Moreover while
men shave or cut their hair, women leave it to grow as long as possible and [291]
never cut it.[1] While men wear pants, women do not; while women's [195]
speech is usually sprinkled with words in the diminutive, men are not
expected to follow this habit; while women carry things on their heads, [482]
men never do so, and only carry things either in the hands, or on the back
or shoulders. On walking along the village streets and alleyways, women
keep near the wall, while men walk in the middle of the street. Although [195]
both men and women are fond of dramatizing their speech, yet they have
different stylized ways of doing this. While men use their index fingers as [201]
a sign of threatening, women point out with their middle finger. Women
grasp their chin or slap their face with open palms for surprise or regret or
shame, while men slowly clap their hands. On being angry or hurt, the [152]
woman's cry is 'Abouh, abouh . . .' and in joy her shrill cry is 'Wri, ri,
ri . . .'. Men are not supposed to utter any cries of joy or anger. In threa- [578]
tening a man will threaten in default to cut off his moustache, while a [302]
woman threatens to cut off her head hair. Men and women use different
invectives and imprecations as well as different greetings. Women in their [195]
speech draw out their words, whereas men end them abruptly. Women do
not participate either in individual or communal worship in the mosque [774]
as they are excluded altogether from it, but there is no Koranic support
for this. On the other hand, they are usually the performers of magico-
religious rituals connected with averting the evil eye, bringing about [756]
pregnancy, or healing the sick; and men are less engaged in this sphere.
It is also interesting to note that, as in Classical Arabic, the dialect of the [193]
village attached the feminine 'n' at the end of the verb in the third person [197]
feminine plural, a feature which does not occur in most of the urban
dialects in Egypt. [369]

Between men and women there is complete avoidance in looking at
each other face to face, except in the case of certain kinships specified by 834
the Koran. On meeting men in the street, women have always to turn their heads to one side, and pull their head covering across their face, and men are expected to lower their heads and not stare at women. The sex taboo on looking and talking without reserve does not apply to children till they reach the adolescent stage, when they gradually acquire such norms and begin to observe them as a part of their value system of politeness. On the other hand, very old women and men are freed from such restric-

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[1] See Appendix VIII, for a boy who said that he would be ashamed if his hair grew long, presumably because it looks like that of girls.

834 tions, and an old woman can pass by a group of men without covering her face, and can salute them, or talk to them on passing, but even then she cannot sit with men outside the house.

INTER-FAMILY RELATIONS

593 It is appropriate here to discuss the stylized norms of relationship and behaviour that should obtain between the various members of the family as an index to the understanding of the social structure and its functioning.

The husband-wife pattern is one where the husband is the superior partner and enjoys the highest position in the family. He is, as the saying goes, 'the supporting pillar and the vantage of the house', who is expected to make all the important decisions. The wife should tell her husband of the major events in the household, though he should not by convention betray any eagerness in enquiring about them. The husband is socially responsible for the acts and undertakings of his wife, immediately she moves from her matrilocal residence. He usually plans the work of his sons, while the wife does the same with the daughters; but he is not expected to interfere with his wife's domestic work. On the other hand, the wife is supposed to be submissive, devoted, and respectful to her husband. Sexual fidelity is the hallmark of sustained marriage relation- [837] ship, as infidelity entails at least divorce, if not attempting to kill the wife and the paramour. As a wife, she should also attend to her husband, offering the best food to him rather than to the children or herself; the reason being that she can always have children but she cannot afford to have a substitute for her supporter (sanad). She should open the door for her husband when he knocks, pour out the water when he washes his hands [264] after the meal, and give him priority in every respect.

Although the wife seems subordinate in this pattern of relationship, she is almost the absolute manager of the house. She is the treasurer of the crops, money, legal documents, and the holder of the keys to the various [156] chests in the house. If the man is expected to be generous and showy, the wife is expected to be frugal and industrious. The saying is that 'the man is like an overflowing sea, while the woman is like a dyke, checking his undue extravagance'. It is also conceded that the building up of a man is due to his wife, but so is his downfall, which would be regarded as the result of his wife's domestic policy.

In spite of the fact that married women do not work in the field in Silwa and in most parts of Aswan Province, the wife certainly monopolizes cer- [462] tain economic pursuits which are considered to be purely her domain. [231] She raises chickens, geese, ducks, goats and sheep, and men recognize this as a purely female occupation. This is in contrast to the raising of cows, camels and donkeys by men. My informant, Mahmoud, told me: 'Women look after the "small change" while men look after the pounds.' The wife raises poultry and tends to small change as these are directly concerned

with food consumption. There is no wife in the village who does not 593
pursue this type of activity, as it is great disgrace not to be able to let [594]
blood flow even from a chicken if a guest comes to visit her husband, or
at least provide her husband or children with a 'meat dish' on festival
occasions. She should also raise goats and sheep, so that in case of death
in the house an 'agira'—slain animal—can be always available at the [764]
funeral.

Between husband and wife no levity of behaviour is permissible, and
no obvious physical intimacy of any sort in public or in front of the children.
In fact, the husband's contacts with the house are very few. It is quite
common to find a child who has been asked by his mother to call father
from a meeting outside saying, 'O father, they say come and speak'. This [195]
is usually a call indicating that food is ready but neither the word food
nor the word mother are ever supposed to be uttered in public. The
father normally quits the house immediately he finishes his meal. [264]

During the first year of marriage the wife does not eat with her husband, [562]
partly because he is in the matrilocal residence, and partly because the
wife has not yet become the mother of the children. Only then can she eat [591]
with him, but she should never confess that she has eaten before he has,
for her eating afterwards is the proper procedure.

From the standpoint of sentiment, the in-law relationship is a strong and 606
binding force, involving exchange of gifts, food and visits similar in many ways to the kinship (lineage) obligations. It is said that the wife's mother is normally very affectionate, and always fussing over her son-in-law, especially when he is in his matrilocal residence, and this attitude is usually a source of complaint and jealousy on the part of the brothers and sisters of the bride. Yet the husband's mother is traditionally harsh, difficult and fault-finding. My informant, Ali, explains the difference of the sentiment of the two mothers-in-law by saying: 'The wife's mother is all too glad to procure a husband for her daughter, and she is grateful to him for marrying her daughter; thus she favours him. The husband's mother is resentful of the fact that her son's attachment, which was solely hers before marriage, is shared with his wife.'

It is also significant that the wife never refers to, or addresses her husband 593
by his first name, especially in public. She either refers to him as 551
'Son of so and so' (his father), or 'my man', or less commonly 'my husband'. 195
She addresses him by saying 'O man'; and the same applies to her husband who refers to his wife as 'my woman' or 'people of the house' and addresses her by saying 'O girl'.[1]

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[1] Concerning the absence of any demonstration of tender feeling between wife and husband, Westermarck writes, 'It is considered indecent of a man to show any affection for his wife, and it would consequently be improper to speak of it in proverbs'. He further maintains that such an absence does not mean that no such feeling exists but has to be understood in relation to the Moorish ideas of decency. *Wit and Wisdom in Morocco*, London, 1930, p. 52.

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY

593 On the whole, the structural attitude of husband to wife is one of possession and protection. While the husband assumes the major role in all the activities outside the house, the woman rules almost supreme in matters connected with the household organization.

The second pattern of relationship is that between father and children. With his children, as with his wife, the father avoids excessive intimacy in order to be respected and obeyed. By keeping social distance, he can be regarded as the most powerful agent in administering the moral and social code of conduct. Through his curt and abrupt admonitions he controls both his sons and daughters. In practice he has more to do with his sons, while the mother has more to do with her daughters, but of course there is a great degree of overlapping. There are no serious clashes between parents as to their respective rights of rearing the children. The mother always tries to keep her children quiet while their father is in the house.

The absolute authority of the father over children is due to the fact that
[611] they belong to him and his family of orientation. Yet it is also recognized
that only the mother and the mother's people can provide the immature
children with affection and tenderness. According to Moslem law, imma-
[586] ture children, in case of divorce, can be kept with the mother till the age of
seven for a boy, and the age of nine for a girl, while the father sends the
expenses of upbringing to the mother. If the mother dies the care and
[855] upbringing of children is usually entrusted to their maternal aunt or
maternal grandmother.

The authority of the parents is sanctioned by the Koran. Obedience of
[577] children to their parents comes next to the Moslem's major obligations
to God and the Prophet. Disobedience to parents ('okouk al walidain) is one of the major sins which is harshly punished in the next world, and, according to Ali, even in this world. A disobedient son or daughter will never live a successful or happy life on earth, and the parents' curse might even affect the son's or daughter's children. To obtain the parental blessing, he continued, is more important than to inherit land or wealth from them, as having their blessing is a prerequisite for both piety and success. Thus, if the father is to wield authority and provide protection, the son or daughter must show 'filial piety' and submission to him as well as to the mother.

One can cite many avoidances that a son must observe in connection with his father, especially in public. A mature son is not expected to sit beside his father in the same gathering; and if his presence is required he should play a very subordinate role, usually evidenced by the fact that he speaks as little as possible, and withdraws at the earliest possible opportunity. If it happens that the father is sitting on a bench at a funeral, for example, the son should sit on the ground; and if he has to sit on a bench, he should not sit on the same bench as his father, or on one opposite to him in order to avoid the face to face position. If the son is lying on the ground, he should sit upon seeing his father passing by; and he should never be sitting while his father is standing. Of course, he cannot smoke in his 593 father's presence, or do anything that might imply that he is not giving full attention to his father.

Amongst the children, the eldest son is favoured by his parents as he is the first to relieve his father of some of his tasks. The importance of age and sex in parents' treatment of their children shows itself, for instance, in the distribution of meat. Boys, on the whole, receive more than girls, and the older gets more than the younger. To vary this order is regarded as one of [861] the means of reward or punishment for the children. An elder son is not expected to argue 'face to face' with his father if the latter refuses any of the former's demands. In this case he has to send a messenger to negotiate with his father. Complete identification with the father is reflected in the saying, 'Your father's enemy is your enemy and your father's friend is your friend', which is also a further evidence of the importance of family and clan solidarity. The observance of the proper rules of conduct with parents as well as with other relatives is the tangible attribute of children [577] described as 'muaddabeen' meaning disciplined (often wrongly translated literally as 'polite'). In his role, the father has to combine discipline backed by moral sanctions.[1]

The relations of children to the mother are certainly warmer, intimate and more affectionate. The mother's tenderness and affection for her children should be repaid in obedience, service and respect. Ali told me that a mother's prayers for her children are the most effective appeal to God. Respect and regard for her is enjoined upon her sons and daughters by the Koran and the Prophetic tradition that says 'Paradise is at the feet of mothers'.

The relationship between brothers is expected to be one of complete solidarity. The common saying goes: 'Support your brother whether he is the oppressor or the oppressed.' If a mother sees her sons squabbling over anything, she admonishes, asking them to deal with each other 'like brothers'. The admonition is also exercised when a boy stranger comes to visit the family, and the boys are asked to go out and play 'like brothers'. However, the first-born has a prominent position among his brothers and sisters. He acts as his father's representative. He gives orders to the younger brothers and sisters, and at least threatens them with punishment, sometimes telling his father. Other members of the family acknowledge and even support the prerogative of the first-born son. But, on the whole, brothers are expected to form a united front and act as 'two heads under one cap'. Older married brothers are usually held to be responsible for the care of their younger brothers and sisters after the death of the father.

Yet, in spite of the fact that brothers are expected to stand by each other through thick and thin, they are not encouraged to walk, sit or play together, especially after the age of eleven or twelve. If two or three brothers

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[1] M. Fortes, 'Parenthood in Primitive Society' (summary of a lecture given in *Man*, Vol. LI, May 1951).

593 have to go to the fields they should not accompany each other, but should follow one after the other to avoid the effects of the evil eye. It is not considered 'polite' for married brothers to sit together at one meeting. Moreover, there is no joking relationship or greeting terms between brothers.

The relationship between sisters is mainly based on affection and mutual co-operation, but not necessarily that of solidarity as they are destined to live in separate homes after marriage. The same pattern of relationship obtains between brothers and sisters although married brothers are [586] socially responsible for their unmarried sisters. In the case of the sister's divorce, her brother is the guardian in the absence of the father. More often [736] than not, a widowed woman who has no sons, goes to live with her brother, and hands over to him her property that she inherited from their father.

595 The relation between consanguine brothers and sisters is supposed to be bristling with friction and jealousy. Though they are from the same father and carry his name, their mothers are called 'darra'-rivals; and hence they identify themselves with their mothers from the emotional point of view. Solidarity between consanguine brothers is not structurally expected as they are not nursed from the same breast. Uterine brothers are expected to be more affable and less quarrelsome with each other. This difference is partly intelligible when it is known that consanguine brothers inherit land and property from their father, while uterine brothers are 'screened' and do not inherit anything from the stepfather. However, 593 [578] whether between half-brothers or full brothers, the expectation of friction between siblings is widely held, and does actually occur, and is usually explained as an expression of their jealousy and rivalry. Apart from the motive of sibling rivalry to which reference will be made later, this friction between siblings could also be attributed to the absolute authority of the father. Jealousy of, and rivalry for the father's power, is suppressed and made acceptable by the possibility of gaining rewards of good behaviour both on social and religious grounds. Hence the father-son conflict is displaced to the brothers and sisters, who are in open rivalry for the father's favour and his sanctions and rewards. Moreover the methods of their early training, as will be discussed later, do not contribute to the suppression of rivalry; on the contrary, they stimulate and emphasize the value of rivalry in social behaviour.[1]

604 The relation between a boy and a girl and his or her paternal or maternal uncle reflects almost the same relationship pattern that obtains between children and their father and mother. The paternal uncle and aunt are expected to support the father in enforcing discipline and social sanctions. It is even said that the main responsibility in this respect lies on the uncle's shoulders, as the father might be inclined to be less firm, having particular love for his children. On the other hand, the maternal uncle and aunt are also the source of affection and pampering. Grown-ups can sit

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[1] This explanation is based on a similar situation in the Tanala culture of Madagascar. Cf. Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and his Society*, pp. 315-16.

with ease in the same gathering with their maternal uncles, but not with 604 their paternal uncles. The relations between paternal and maternal cousins 605 fall in the same line with that of the father's or mother's side.

One of the most salient features that underlies the structural relationships is that although the fabric forming the ideological basis for the social 602 structure is entirely patrilineal as far as descent, inheritance, and prestige 611 are concerned, yet it is dyed in a sentimental and emotional colouring which is preponderantly matrilineal. Towards the close matrilineal kin, the relations are certainly not weaker than towards the close patrilineal kin; they are of a different kind. If the relation of the 'ego' towards the patrilineal side is one of apprehension and alertness, and businesslike, as it were, the relation to the affinal side is one of affection, ease and jesting. It is not unusual for a sister who asks her brother for help to address him as 'Son of my mother' as a means of enlisting his sympathy; or for a brother, on going to visit his sister, to say 'I am going to see "my mother's daughter" '. Some men, whose mothers are of forceful character or whose fathers were married to other wives, are publicly called by their first names followed by their mother's first names. A man or a woman relates himself or herself always to the mother in situations of charm-writing, of incantations to ward off the evil eye or in similar magic rituals. In invoking God's help, women relate the person for whom they are praying to his mother, as this is considered the most genuine and moving way of appealing to God. This could be regarded as further evidence for the emphasis on the matrilineal sentiment in the social structure. In the case of a man or a woman referred directly to his or her mother, this could also be regarded [595] as a functionally convenient way of distinguishing between him or her and the paternal half-brothers or half-sisters. The reference to the matrilineal origin in a polygamous patrilineal society seems to be a device used to distinguish between agnates.[1] Moreover, what Firth has written about the role of the mother's brother in a segmentary system of patrilineal type, applies to Silwa community. In this village, the khal or khala, or the maternal side in general, provides certain compensatory social functions to those provided by the father and the paternal side. The former side provides, as Firth put it, 'a locus of attachment and refuge for the children of the women by contrast with the demands laid upon them by their father's group'. Again, the recognition of the mother's brother's group as one of special interest provides a channel for large-scale social communication and reciprocity between it and the father's group.[2] The same applies to the recognition of in-law relationship.[3]

Such relations and norms governing the relationship between the family 602

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[1] E. L. Peters in his review of Hilma Granqvist, 'Chil[illegible] Problems among the Arabs' in *Man*, Vol. LI, September 1951, p. 126.

[2] Raymond Firth in his review of M. Fortes, 'Th[illegible]b of Kinship' in *Africa*, Vol. XXI, April, 1951, p. 159.

[3] For kinship terms in Silwa, see Appendix IV, 'A[illegible]ote on Kinship Terms'.

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867 Such relations and norms governing the relationship between the family members reflect and imply certain ways of behaviour which the child imbibes within the family circle. They also reflect some of the necessary requirements for the harmonious functioning of the various social units. The family in Silwa is one of the fields of teaching, and here more perhaps of learning, some of the standardized social relations and their moral significance.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN ACTION

602 Here some of the functions of the social structure have been examined. It is doubtless true that structural norms provide the articulating force in the village society, acting as traffic lights for individual behaviour. They define personal and corporate rights and duties with individuals, families and clans; indicate the extent of emotional involvement, which is expected to be very strong with close relatives, and joint family, fading somewhat in intensity as the kin spreads in the clan. They also specify the kind of relationship with the patrilineal and the matrilineal sides. Differentiation in kinship relations carries with it differentiation of behaviour, rights and obligations, and affective attachments.

Moreover, the individual faces each of life's rejoicings or crises not only by himself but with the support and co-operation of all those related to him either by patrilineal ('asaba), matrilineal (lahma) and in-law (nasab) relationship, or any other intimate ties. The extent and frequency of such a support, and the hierarchical unit that undertakes the help, varies according to the situation envisaged, to the number of close relatives, and to the prestige of the person.

In sickness, for instance, it is worth noting how kinsmen and kinswomen flock to visit a sick person, talk to him, attempt to alleviate his pain, pray for his safety, and give advice and medicine.

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539 There is a popular song which indicates the amount of security and pride that a sick man derives from being surrounded by his family and people. The song imagines a conversation between a doctor and a sick person, where the doctor asks who is going to pay for the medicine. The sick person is shocked by such a question and instantly replies that he has so many people who will see to it. The song goes on to show how each member of the family offers the doctor something in turn. But in the end the patient dies, because he is so aggravated and embittered by the doctor's question, which implied that he had no people to attend him in such a matter as paying the doctor's fees and medicine charges. 'To have no [508] people' is one of the greatest insults that could be directed to any person. The song goes:

A sick person asked the doctor to treat him.
The doctor agreed, but enquired as to who was responsible for paying the expenses of treatment.
[533]
The sick person replied: 'O doctor, don't think that I am without support.

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> I have a thousand people besides my paternal and maternal uncles.' 539
> When the patient's mother heard the conversation, she offered the doctor her necklace and bracelets. 53
> When the father heard about this, he offered his land and property.
> When the sister heard about this, she offered her anklets and earrings.
> When his people (i.e. joint family) heard about this, they said 'We shall all pay it with no fuss or difficulty'.

This support shows itself not only when the relatives and friends go to 602 visit the sick person in the village, irrespective as to whether the disease is infectious or not, but also when they visit him in hospital in town. If the person recovers from a serious illness, or comes back home after being away for some time, the people go to congratulate him for his recovery or for his return home by saying 'Let us thank God for your safety'.

To take another example, if a cow or a camel has been seriously injured in an accident, it is killed, and the owner's relatives, neighbours, and friends are morally compelled to buy a portion of the meat to part-compensate for the loss. If a person's animal dies he is consoled by others with the invocation 'May God compensate you'.

Death is another major event in which the family finds itself supported 602 by condolences and sympathies of kinsfolk. If the deceased belongs to the 765 category of youngsters, condolence is compulsory on the clan and intimate friends only. If he belongs to the second and third categories of age groups (unmarried or adults) the whole village has to condole with the sufferers. In death, more than in any other event, kinship ties are the most important factor in deciding one's social obligations. It is incumbent on the close relatives both paternal and maternal, as well as in-laws, to stay away from work and remain in the guest house for ten or fifteen days, and frequently sleep there, or in the case of women, in the house of the deceased relative. Close relatives have to assist in conveying the funeral bier to the [764] cemetery, to mourn the deceased more than others, and to send food to the guest house and to the house of the deceased, normally an obligation more upon the clan house-heads and the close maternal relatives than [613] upon any others.

The same solidarities and mutual family and clan obligations manifest 602 themselves on occasions of rejoicing such as birth, circumcision and weddings, by sending gifts, food, by helping in the preparation of the ceremony, [43 or at least by merely attending in the case of men or sending out a joy-cry in the case of women.

Moreover, the social structure functions also as a means of mediation in 613 the sectional frictions that are bound to arise. In the following example, 627 which the writer witnessed, the head members of a clan mediated between

613 627 two joint families to 'level all the misunderstandings' between them. The dispute had arisen between the two joint families of 'Amareen and Karamsha, both belonging to the 'Amrab clan, Musiab section. Hag Ahmad 'Imran, the head of the first family, asked the Karamsha to lend him one of their camels to carry some maize straw from the field, but his request was refused because they alleged that they had no camels to spare as they were engaged in building a house. On another occasion, Hag Ahmad 'Imran insisted on taking the camel from one of the Karamsha while he was bringing water to be used in the building; people interfered and the matter was settled for the time being. After three days, he made another attempt and slapped the camel-driver, 'Othman, on the face, cursing his people. 'Othman, the offended man, could not retaliate as Hag Ahmad was the senior man of his family and older than he, and it is 'impolite' according to Arab traditions to slap such a man. People immediately gathered to settle this affair temporarily and prevent any further complications. Then Hag Ahmad's son came on the spot and started to insult 'Othman (who was his brother-in-law) and 'Othman, finding his equal, stood up to the challenge, but people intervened. The dispute, in spite of its temporary ending, had left 'something in the souls of the two houses'.

The 'residue in the souls' came up to the surface when the pilgrims from the clan came back from Mecca and had to be invited by the heads of the clan. The 'Amareen invited the Karamsha to co-operate, but the latter declined. In the meantime, it happened that a member of the Karamsha offered his help for the occasion but was refused by the 'Amareen. This added fuel to the fire and the situation between the two families became tense.

Deputations and mediators went between the two families to fix an 'Arab council' for arbitration. A respected and pious man suggested the family of Badawab for the purpose, but the Karamsha objected on the grounds that the former house was closely related to the 'Amareen. Then the arbitration was raised to the clan level and the Hasaballab clan from 'Onab section (to which neither side belonged) was suggested and this was accepted by both sides. On the appointed evening, the adult members of the two houses came to the Hasaballab guest house, where they were, received and tea was served.

The meeting started by the Hasaballab head clansman reciting
[788] 'Wahhidouh ya Gamaa—Say that God is one, O gathering'. Everybody
present answered, 'There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his
Prophet'. Then the chosen head of the Hasaballab asked the Karamsha,
'What is your story?' 'Abd-el-Gid, the head of the Karamsha, stated, 'We
are claiming duties from the 'Amareen'. Then the head of the Hasaballab
proposed that after sitting together in their guest house, the two sides
should reconcile 'on the white and the reading of Fatiha', meaning that
they should root out the past misunderstandings, and should forget all

about them without going into any argument. The Karamsha, however, 613
who were the accusers, opposed the suggestion and insisted on their case 627
being heard, and consequently their rights being acknowledged. The argument was stated by the head of the Karamsha speaking and being interrupted by members of the disputing house here and there, as well as by members of his house. Then Hag Ahmad 'Imran began to defend his case, and then free argument took place.

One of the most effective devices in the Arab councils is the so-called 'mulakah' (a getting together), where on any dilemma in the course of argument, one or two persons from the mediators take one person or more from the disputing sides for a 'mulakah' to persuade him in a corner, or another room away from the general meeting, through personal and more intimate hearing to follow what the mediators proposed. Their usual form of pressure is to appeal to the person to 'consider the Arabs, or the people, or his kinsfolk'. The idea behind this device is to avoid any personal [56]
embarrassment or retreat in public, as this brings shame ('ar). If the retreat is accepted on a more intimate level, then the person has retreated owing to the pressure brought upon him because of personal ties or to his considerations to the 'Arabs', yet such a formulation of retreat is only implicit.

However, the 'mulakah' which occurred three times during the meeting did not produce the required effects. The Hasaballab, the arbitrating clan, had then to go outside by themselves to agree on 'the rights of the Arabs which no one now should fear to declare'.

The formulation of the verdict is very interesting as an index of the functioning elements of the social structure. The Hasaballab declared two decisions; the first was that Hag Ahmad 'Imran committed a double wrong by slapping 'Othman the camel-driver, and by not preventing, even by slapping, his son from getting entangled with 'Othman. The second decision was that the clan of 'Amrab, to which the two disputing families belong, had committed a mistake by not mediating between the two families in due time.

As the disputants are morally compelled to accept the arbitration of whoever they agree upon to take this part, the 'Amareen had to shake hands with the Karamsha, followed by all present reading the Fatiha.

Yet this was not the end of everything in this Arab council. Hag Ahmad 'Imran, feeling that injustice had been done to him, immediately declared that he 'claimed rights from Hasaballab', meaning that he wanted to sue the arbitrating clan before another clan, a charge which they have to accept. The case now is between the 'Amareen and the Hasaballab, and they both agreed to appoint the 'Awadallab clan in the neighbouring village to take up the arbitration between them.[1] If the Hasaballab's verdict is considered unjust, they have to pay the 'Amareen

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[1] If any clan or family is appealed to by both disputing parties for arbitration, it cannot refuse to act.

613 627 ten pounds; otherwise the 'Amareen have to pay the sum of ten pounds. The payment of money actually takes place, but it is always given back to the payer as 'Arab-coffee' and there is no appeal beyond this stage.

623 627 The Arab council is the traditional agent for maintaining law and order in the village, and its composition and functioning reflect the traditional concept of authority. Prestige derived from age, experience, and sobriety combined with power attached to landowners and heads of large families who are well known for their hospitality, are the main qualifications for selection in these councils. [554] Although these principles are not rigidly adhered to in the village itself, they are more observed in composing a council to arbitrate in a dispute in another village. [628] Like Chan Kom, Silwa conceives of a hierarchy of power and responsibility. As in Tepoztlan, government is ideally a fatherly discharge of responsibility by the powerful and able to give benefit to all, but with lesser men taking lesser places.[1] These Arab councils vary in their composition according to the gravity of the issue. They are formed frequently and spontaneously to settle disputes, but their proceedings are almost uniform.

627 Women have similar gatherings for settling feminine disputes, but they are less formal and lack that atmosphere of solemnity that prevails in men's councils. Men's councils, however, could be convoked to settle women's conflicts creating disruption between two houses, and men are expected to plead the case of the women concerned and undertake the responsibility of making them abide by the council's decision.

In the arguments that take place in these councils, one can hardly fail to notice the importance of the mediators appealing to the kinship idioms to minimize the insult or the loss, or the accusers to exaggerate the offence. 'If my cousins, or brothers do so and so, how would others treat me? . . .'

623 627 692 It is also worth noticing that these Arab councils are held irrespective of civil law procedures. In the case of attack on somebody, or damage to fields or animals, the Arab council has to be formed to smooth the relations between the disputants. The norms and procedures of Arab councils are accepted by common consent as the basis of law and order as distinct from legalistic ways. To appeal to a remote and impersonal power vested in the local or national government is not a socially acceptable procedure, as any dispute should first be discussed by the people involved as well as those who mediate between them. My informant, Ali, regretted the fact that people do not nowadays accept reconciliation according to Arab council verdict, as they used to do; and much recourse is made to legal courts by 'brother against brother' and even father against son.

623 627 [154] It is also evident that these Arab councils perform a very useful psychological function. By airing disputes, and transferring the offence from one circle to another in the Arab council, aggression is dissipated and diffused.

In settling damages in Arab councils, the amount has to be fixed by the gathering, but it is shameful not to return the compensation (awad) which
Should be declined by saying, 'God compensates me in a better way'.

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[1] Robert Redfield, *A Village that chose Progress*, p. 165.

should be declined by saying, 'God compensates me in a better way'. 600

The following three instances are concrete situations showing the working of the social structure. 602 The first is the installation of a new corn mill by all the clans in the village 621 to bring to an end the monopoly of the already existing privately owned mill. 459 The rough estimates were divided into 24 kirats (parts), each section responsible for collecting the money [177] equivalent to its 12 kirats.[1] In the second process of distribution, each section divides its share amongst the clans, and the head of each clan is responsible for collecting his share from family heads; by dividing his kirats into sahms, the people of his clan could buy a minimum of one-tenth of a sahm. No section or clan could be helped or its shares be taken by another. It was interesting to listen to the village crier calling out the names of the clans and the two sections, to induce haste in collecting the money.

Such procedure was followed for repairing the village mosque. 602 In this case the question was not so much that of collecting money, as of recruiting 621 the men to bring stone, water, straw, etc., for the repairs; and this was also 476 dealt with on the same structural basis.

The third instance was the allocation of new building land to the 602 village, which was also first divided into two sections; then each section 621 was divided into equal parts amongst its clans, which in turn had to divide 425 its share among the families.

The system of village government reflects a combination of central 621 authority agents and the village social organization. The village head is an official called 'Omda' who used to be elected from a list of five people 622 who own not less than 10 feddans. Two years ago, the law was changed 666 and the Omda is now elected from amongst thirteen people who own enough land to make them eligible. The job is unpaid, and it is reckoned as a privilege to be elected. The Omda's seniority is something like the medieval *primus inter pares*. He represents the village on official occasions. One of his traditional and honorary functions is to receive guests, travellers, and government officials in his guest house. 624 Silwa has also two unpaid 616 'Sheikhs' each representing one of the two sections of the village and thus 666 commonly referred to as 'Sheikh hissa'; these are also elected from amongst those who are eligible (minimum requirement was 5 feddans, now being relaxed). [627] The Omda and the two sheikhs settle the disputes that arise in the village, usually with the aid of Arab councils, or with the help of people whom they select on different occasions. Each sheikh is primarily concerned with the problems of his section (hissa).

The central government is represented by the police headquarters with 625 a police officer or constable in charge and policemen and ghafeers. While the policemen are always from outside the village, the ghafeers are villagers, put up usually from different clans, acting as the Omda's messengers, as well as the local agents between the village and the police headquarters, [804]

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[1] The feddan has 24 kirats, and each kirat 12 sahms.

631 headquarters. From the point of view of central government, the province of Aswan is divided into three centres (Markaz) with a 'Mamour' in charge of each. Aswan is the capital of the province where the 'Mudeeriah' lies with a 'Mudeer' at the top.

Another incident which occurred during the writer's field work reflects 619 the villagers' pride in their ancestry, working as a cohesive force. Clan 574 heads and other representatives from the village paid a visit to a town called Bardis in Girga Province. The visit was in return for a visit paid by a group of people from Bardis who came to invite the Silwanians to Bardis to establish and confirm their holy descent as being related to the G'afra. This idea had started when some pilgrims from Silwa met others from the same stock coming from Bardis. Immediately they tried to find out whether they were related; genealogies were cited; and they discovered that they were connected in lineage. The group in Bardis seized upon this chance as their status amongst the other families in Bardis had not hitherto been accepted as equivalent; they thus wished to confirm their status as of 'holy origin'. The group that visited Bardis for this purpose was, of course, composed of the clan heads, or their eldest sons, 'people who could converse', a learned religious man, and two elderly men well conversant in genealogies. On their arrival at Bardis they were generously entertained for four days. After the visit, the group from Bardis wrote in *al-Ahram*, one of the widely circulated newspapers, thanking their 'paternal cousins' for the honour they had done them by their visit.

The desire for kinship relationship arises, if not in such a spectacular 602 manner, on occasions of everyday life. It is not unusual to find village folk [609] eager to establish some kinship relation with a stranger in the train, or with a casual guest in the guest house. To address people politely is to call [576] them by kinship idioms. Villagers, as well as town and city dwellers, on enquiring about the way, begin, for example, by saying, 'O brother', or 'O paternal uncle, could you tell me the way to so and so'. In letter writing it is very common for friends to address each other by saying, 'My dear [576] brother', and to write the appropriate kinship term on the envelope.

Yet the kinship structure carries within itself the defects and weaknesses of its strength. It not only functions as a cohesive and articulating force, but equally as a source of friction and sectional bias. Because the village is so mixed up in blood relationships, it suffers from all the intrigues and maladjustment that emanate from so much impinging of social relationships. The disharmony occurs not only between families or clans, but also 602 between very close kin. If it is claimed that every culture is characterized 578 by a major type conflict, upon which the minor and atypical conflicts of the individual are patterned, then Silwa community suffers greatly from the stresses and strains that obtain between relatives.[1] Whether the cause is division of land, marriage problems, or reputation and prestige, endless friction, disputes, and uneasy relations occur. Brother is pitted against brother, father against son, mother against daughter, and so on between the various other categories of relatives. In fact, some of the popular sayings indicate that the relation between kin is pregnant with friction and discord. It is said that 'relatives are like scorpions', 'the relative's pot never reaches the boiling point' and 'who brings disasters but relatives?'. It is also indicative of the uneasy side of connections between relatives to hear that it is from the relatives more than others that one should guard against the effects of the evil eye. 602 578 [154]

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[1] G. Devereux, 'Mohave Beliefs concerning Twins', in *American Anthropologist*, 1940, pp. 588-9.

The 'in-law' relationship also plays an important part in the harmony or discord that pervades a family atmosphere. Whether brothers live together as one economic unit, or whether a father 'repulses' his married son, depends to a great extent on the congeniality of the brother's wives, or the son's wife and her people. In this particular context, the conflict is usually one between the structurally sanctioned behaviour between the brothers and the new situation created by marriage and children to two different women. Thus ideally brothers should marry sisters to minimize disputes over the children or domestic affairs, and this is probably one of the reasons for the preferential marriage of cousins. In the case of a married son, the parents have priority over the wife and her people, as descent is the structural keynote to behaviour in this situation. 606 578 [582]

Indeed a great deal of friction and uneasiness in relationship is due to the fact that the individual in some situations is unable to strike a balance between the structural behaviour on one hand, and the exigencies of life and personal feelings on the other hand. A great deal of the diffused and overt aggression that is prevalent in this community is partly due to the 'bottling up' of personal and spontaneous feeling, or at least to the very limited scope for its outlet or for its direct expression in action. 578 154 156

A few examples of disputes, illustrating this point can be given. Two brothers were married to two sisters, and were living in one compound working together, and forming an economic unit. The wife of the younger brother died, and he remarried a girl who was unrelated to the brother's wife. Immediately intrigues and friction arose, and the two brothers had to separate. The friction cropped up again when the older brother got his daughter married to a cousin of theirs, while his brother had a boy who was considered socially more eligible because he was the girl's cousin through both father and mother. This event brought the brothers to non-speaking terms and 'Arabs' tried twice to reconcile them, but met with no success. 578 593 [582]

Another interesting case was of a father suing his son before the court and trying to denounce him as his son. The cause was the rage of the father alleging that his son had made himself a nuisance in the village by his gossip, his writing of complaints against people to the official authorities in the central government, and on top of that, he had married without the father's approval.

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578 Another dispute between two brothers was where the younger accused
593 the older of being a spendthrift, and in his extravagance, mainly due to his wife, he 'spoilt' the reputation of the family by borrowing from other people though he earned more than his younger brother. In spite of the often repeated admonition of the younger, the older brother persisted in his ways. The misunderstanding became acute when both agreed to build a new house, the younger undertaking the expenses of the building, to be paid by his brother for his share, which he had not done. The dispute flared up again when the older brother got his daughter married without consulting the younger brother.

Another dispute which has been dragging on for a considerable time is
578 that over the office of 'Omda'. For the last fifty years the office had been
622 in one family. The death of the previous Omda started the strife between
595 his sons from different mothers. He had six children from one wife and five from another. During his lifetime, the two houses united in service and respect for the father in spite of the seamy side of relationship. Immediately he died ten years ago, the suppressed rivalries and jealousies flared up. The sons disagreed as to who was to be elected for the office. An Arab council met and decided to put up the second son from the first wife (as the first son was illiterate).[1] The other house had to submit to the decisions of the council; yet the rivalry never died down, and the brothers from the other house still waited their chance. After devious intrigues, the Omda was suspended for corrupt conduct related to the system of rationing. After the lengthy court procedures which took almost a whole year, he was found not guilty. The time for filling the vacant post of Omda came, and the deposed Omda as well as the eldest brother of the other house entered their names officially as candidates. It is interesting to note that the three surviving uncles of the two candidates were with the new one.
[604] One of the main reasons for their not supporting the deposed Omda was that he did not treat them as paternal uncles as they expected him to do. Moreover, on certain occasions he insisted that they should stand for him, as they used to do for his father—an attitude they resented. On the election day both the candidates went to the 'Mudeeriah' in Aswan, followed by dozens of their supporters. The new candidate gained the office this time; thereupon, the other house started their intrigues to depose him.

578 A mother quarrelled with her son because he did not give her as much attention and economic support as he did his wife. The son had to
[593] leave the village and took a domestic job in Cairo. The mother sued her son in the court because he did not support her in old age while he was earning money. Indeed a great deal of discord occurs as a result of the conflicts between the loyalties and obligations towards 'the family of
[602] orientation' and 'the conjugal family' and the in-law relatives. It is often said that the newly married person has two minds, to denote the

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[1] After the death of an Omda his sons are usually considered for succession; in fact, the Omda's sons, even during his lifetime, are addressed as Omdas.

potential friction in the new situation; and to the extent they are in har- 578
mony he can be secure in his new status. Many marriages actually break 602
down because of the friction between parents, sisters or brothers, and wife
or mother-in-law. This seems to be a common feature of patriarchal [586]
societies where the main emphasis is not on marriage as such, but on its
wider social implications, being an institution relating two families and [581]
whose foundation is not 'romantic love' but having children.[1]

Such instances, and many others, show the delicacy of the relations in the 602
kinship pattern. It is worth noticing that such delicacy is more on the paternal
than the maternal side where the scope or the manifestations of tension
are not so wide or numerous. Although such friction amongst kin is a
valid element in their behaviour towards each other, it cannot obviate
certain corporate structural symbols of social behaviour. If, for instance, a
man is attacked or publicly insulted, his brother or cousin must stand with
him in spite of whatever conflicts are hitherto outstanding. If an uncle [605]
dies, his cousins must attend the burial ceremony and 'passionately'
mourn him. Gifts and money must be exchanged on occasions such as
circumcision and wedding irrespective of the nature of personal relationship.
Absence from the village is not an excuse for not performing one's
obligations. Villagers in towns or cities have to mourn publicly their
deceased in cafés or other places where others from Silwa, residing there,
come to condole with them. On their return to the village they must perform
the mourning rituals for close kin by weeping on their way from the
station to the house, or if the deceased is a distant relative, by visiting
his people, in spite of the lapse of time. On the whole, severing personal
relationship for any reason does not necessarily mean ignoring one's
corporate relationships by forfeiting any of the rights or shirking any of
the duties.

Cutting across these bilateral kinship ties is a flow of inter-personal 608
relationships which are not caught up in corporate bonds. This is what
Professor Fortes designates as ties of 'cognatic kinship'. Cognatic ties are
in contradistinction to agnatic ties, which primarily stress the corporate
duties and rights and the solidarity of the social groupings, at the expense
of the individual's private interests. Cognatic ties both within and across
the kinship system differ from the agnatic in one important respect. In
Fortes' words: 'They are ties of amity and mutual interest between individuals.
Private rights and duties and personal loyalties prevail as against
corporate rights. They represent the recognition that the direct social
bonds of individual with individual are as vital for the wellbeing of the
society as the fixed framework of corporate groupings. This sense of interdependence
of men as individuals in the hard struggle of ordinary living,
not only transcends the more rigid solidarities of the family, lineage . . .

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[1] See Talcott Parsons, 'The Kinship System of the Contemporary United States', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLV, 1943.

but also counteracts the friction and disturbances that constantly spring up in the relations of individuals with one another.'[1]

The adoption of Fortes' distinction and its implication is not arbitrary in this context, as it coincides almost completely with the two categories of relationship in the village. The agnatic kinship ties correspond to the 'Karaib' category while cognate kinship ties correspond to the 'Habaib' category. As one co-operates, for example, with relatives, one also selects a distantly related person or group, calling them 'Habaib', to co-operate with, and in this case a kinship term might be given to him or them as 'cousins'. The two categories are clearly distinguished in the sphere of mutual obligations, for in the case of cognatic ties, misunderstanding and friction would stop that form of social duties between the two sides.

[1] M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship*, pp. 343–4.

Chapter Three

FOLK LIFE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE VILLAGE

A STUDY of the village community cannot ignore an analysis of the process of social change and its by-products. 121 Unlike a primitive tribe, the village community is an integral part of a larger whole—the nation. One of the contributions of modern sociology is the distinction between community and state or society as constituting 'distinct categories of integrative forces'. The integrative forces of the community are based on more spontaneous, natural, and direct relations binding people who are of the same kin; whereas society is more artificial, more indirect, and more deliberate in its relations, maintaining its unity and cohesion with more conscious effort. The social heritage of the community is mainly local, tied up with its habitat; thus, usually, community and locality are almost synonymous.[1]

Such distinction has also been made between genuine and spurious culture, or between folk culture and modern civilization. In the analysis of Silwa community and social change, the concept of folk society is to be adopted as a useful one. Robert Redfield has successfully introduced this term to suggest the inclusion of 'peasant and rustic peoples who are not wholly independent of cities'.[2] Hence, it is necessary to project folk life in Silwa, and the processes of social change, against the larger framework of culture change in the Egyptian society.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the state has envisaged 177 the modernization of Egypt mainly in terms of Western civilization, the impact of which has been steadily increasing since the French expedition of 1798. It was through the efforts of the French scholars and Napoleon's reforms that Egypt started to interest itself in Western civilization. The Western way of life was greatly admired by Mohammad Ali, who ascended to power in 1805, and whose ambitious plans to build up a modern state led him to imitate Europe as widely as possible.

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[1] This distinction is based on S. F. Nadel's article on 'Nupe State and Community', in *Africa*, Vol. VIII, 1935.

[2] Robert Redfield, 'The Folk Society', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LII, 1947, footnote, p. 293.

Ever since then, certain aspects of European civilization have been influencing the Egyptian folk life to varying degrees. However, the Westernization of Egypt, with its differential rate mainly between urban and rural districts, could be summarized in the increasing industrialization, in the spread of schools, in the establishment of a parliamentary system with its concomitant political parties, in the awakening of national feeling, in the expansion of medical facilities and the decline of folk medicine, in the growth of an intellectual middle class and a working class, and in the expanding of the press and other means of communication. Upon the degree of the penetration of such social forces depend the transformations that the folk structure have undergone.[1]

The phrase 'modernization' and not 'Westernization' of Egypt is in fact a happier term, which is more acceptable to the Egyptians. The educated Egyptians take a special pride in the approximation of their country's institutions and reforms to those of the West, together with an emphasis on their national colouring. Some of them have a romantic way of exalting the glories of the past mixed with various aspirations towards religious revival.

The impact of Western civilization on Egypt could be described in the two responses designated by Toynbee as 'Zealotism' and 'Herodianism'. The former response describes a state of mind and a pattern of behaviour which adheres to the traditional way of life with great scrupulousness and rigidity in the face of the pressures of the Western challenge. The Zealot's behaviour is essentially irrational and instinctive; he says in his heart that he will go thus far and no further. Herodianism is the other response based on the principle that the most effective way to guard against the danger of the new challenge is to master its secrets and to learn to fight the enemy with his own weapons and tactics.[2]

The 'ulema of al-Azhar, particularly during the nineteenth century and the beginnings of the twentieth century, have been amongst the strongest opponents of Western life and the general trends of secularization. The attitude of the 'ulema in the nineteenth century towards the Western civilization is revealed in a conversation between Michaud, a French traveller who came to Egypt during the reign of Mohammad Ali, and the Mufti of al-Mansourah. The latter maintained that although Europeans accuse Easterners of rigidity and lack of purpose, they themselves do not know where and when to stop. Therefore, they always exceed their limits, and to the Mufti, going beyond the limit is worse than not being able to reach it. The result of European civilization, he believed, was chaos and dissatisfaction. He likened it to a fermenting drink which breaks the vessel that holds it.[3]

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[1] For a study of the impact of Western civilisation on Egyptian life a generation ago, see Hans Kohn, *Nationalism and Imperialism in the Hither East*, London, 1932; and *Western Civilization in the Near East*, London, 1936.

[2] Arnold Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial*, pp. 192–4.

[3] S. Ghorbal, *Mohammad Ali al-Kabir*, p. 76.

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The attitude of the 'ulema and the interpretation of Islam in a narrow-minded way have led some of the progressive 'ulema to a new way of thinking for the rejuvenation of the Moslem way of life. This need was voiced by al-Sayyid Jamal-al-Din Al-Afghani and Mohammad Abduh, whose ideas met with opposition from the 'ulema of their day. Al-Afghani, on his visit to Cairo in 1871, urged the need for adapting Islam to modern conditions and of instituting radical educational reforms in al-Azhar. He believed that Moslem countries should work for their freedom from foreign domination and reformulate their religion which, he thought, by reason of its inner spiritual force could be reinterpreted to suit the demands of modern life.[1] Mohammad Abduh, like his teacher al-Afghani, was a vigorous critic of the narrow content and method of teaching in al-Azhar. He advocated the broadening of the basis of learning by studying not only the works of classical Arabic and theology for the defence of the Faith, but by studying also the modern sciences, history, and comparative religion to catch up with Western progress.[2]

However, secularization of life in Egypt and divorce from religious principles and justifications have rarely been more than skin deep. In the constitution of the country, Islam is the religion of the state. Moreover, Islamic forces have always provided the basic guidance in life for individual as well as for corporate life.

Indications of a religious revival are witnessed in movements like that of the Moslem Brotherhood and in the considerable flow of literature dealing with the life of the Prophet, the Companions, and the four Caliphs, written by eminent authors. Indeed, many of the Arab thinkers assert that without the inspiration and guidance of Islam, the future holds barren prospects for the Moslem world whose spiritual and intellectual greatness depends essentially upon its faith. They also claim that a purification of Islam is also necessary to rid it of the superstitions which have led to the backwardness of the masses. This purification, combined with subsequent intensification of Islamic principles, can alone enable religion to become as creative a force as it once used to be.[3]

One of the main forces that is inextricably connected with the process of social change since the beginning of the twentieth century is the emergence of the middle class in Egypt. Hitherto, Egypt's economic and political structure was dominated by a class of warriors similar to the medieval knights in Europe. The dynasties of the Ayyubides (A.D. 1171–1250) and the Mamelukes (A.D. 1250–1517) relied almost entirely on a class of warriors in both their internal and external policies. This class received its crushing blow from Mohammad Ali in 1811, and this paved the way for the great landowners to wield social and political power. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the middle class of government

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[1] Charles Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, p. 15.
[2] H. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, p. 39.
[3] A. J. Arberry and Rom Landau (ed.), *Islam Today*, pp. 14–16.

officials, lawyers, doctors, teachers, and those engaged in commerce, has begun to exert an increasing influence on Egyptian life. This class sees itself not only standing against external political pressure, but also against big landowners, thus championing the feelings and aspirations of the whole nation.

Another important factor in Egyptian society is the relatively recent feeling of nationhood and state sovereignty. Since the Arab conquest of Egypt in A.D. 642, the country has been a part of the Moslem world. In Islam, political and religious matters are indivisible, and their conduct is vested in the ruler who is the instrument of both canon and civil law. But to say that Islam does not distinguish social life and civic status from religious principles of the Faith does not mean that it has established a new pattern of life in the Near East. The religious foundations of society were existent in the ancient Egyptian times, when the Pharaoh was the supreme ruler as well as the representative of the gods on earth.

The Ottoman Empire, however, witnessed in its latter days the gradual moving away from Islamic theocracy. With this, the religious colouring of the Caliphate gradually paled until that institution was eventually abolished in modern Turkey in 1924. The breakdown of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War left the way open for the rise of Arab nationalism in the modern sense of the word.

It has been the deliberate policy of the Egyptian rulers, since the days of Mohammad Ali, to modernize Egypt. More often than not, the pursuit of such a policy has led to aping of Western institutions, regardless of the different social, economic and political background. It is one of the recent contributions of sociology that 'the end products of culture fusion resemble a chemical rather than a mechanical mixture. The resulting culture will not be a simple aggregation of elements, all of which can be traced to one or the other of the parent cultures, but a new thing many of whose patterns cannot be directly referred to either.' In the light of such a remark one is not surprised to find that many Western institutions have not yielded the results intended and expected from them in Egyptian society. An interesting line of research would be to compare the products of the Egyptian parliamentary system, Europeanized system of schools, co-education, industrialization, and so forth, with similar institutions and processes in the West. A critical evaluation and adaptation of borrowings must be always faced; and importations of institutions can only be justified in so far as they could be digested and assimilated by local conditions.

It is appropriate here to mention that, in spite of the political and social vicissitudes that have overtaken Egyptian society, the folk-life has mainly held its own within, and even sometimes against, the trends in the larger society. Various political struggles have occurred throughout the history of Egypt, but the common people, tied down to their land, submitted to any social order enforced upon them. They rarely took part in any resistance and left the battles to the military and ruling classes. To them a

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177 military defeat meant the ousting of one ruling power by another.[1] Although it is these rulers who have engaged the main interest of historians, it is the habits and traditions of the common folk that have, in fact, been the ultimate forces determining the general run of Egyptian life. What Gruening wrote of Mexico, quoted by Redfield, is equally applicable to the situation in Egypt. 'In few countries is political history less significant than in Mexico, yet its historiographies are pre-eminently political.' Redfield continues: 'The formal institutions, the explicit statement of programme or policy, the bulk of contemporary documents, lie remote from the ways of the masses and record their history almost not at all. The world of the cultivated classes who alone are articulate and alone communicate freely with us, is a world apart from that of the folk.'[2]

621 Only to a very small extent has Silwa been affected by the forces mentioned earlier. It still preserves its folk culture as the basis of its community life. The village is a homogeneous community in the threefold implication of the term. It is homogeneous to the extent that the villagers belong, or at least consider themselves to belong, to one blood group, engaging in the same kind of work, and, moreover, characterized by slow rate of social change.[3]

121 The question of social change exists, however, in terms of 'setting and background', and not by itself. 'This is why a discussion of change in culture has meaning only as part of the problem of cultural stability. Both terms are relative and dependent on one another.'[4]

In the process of social change examined in Yucatan, Redfield maintains that the life of primitive peoples can be contrasted with the way of life characterizing civilization in modern urban centres. He maintains that the change is one from a relatively immobile, homogeneous society in which relationships are personal, controls familial, sanctions sacred, with a well-integrated culture, to one tending to have opposite characteristics. In short, organization, individualization, and secularization are causally interrelated with isolation, integration, and homogeneity. In Yucatan, the

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[1] Gibb and Bowen say that during the Ottoman rule of the Arab Provinces, and even before that, governors and governed had little effect on each other. 'The explanation is to be found in the very lack of a complex, all-embracing political organization. . . . We may visualize Moslem society as composed of two co-existing groups, the relations between which were for the most part formal and superficial. One group formed the governing class of soldiers and officials, the other the governed class of merchants, artisans and cultivators. Each was organized internally on independent lines and neither group interfered with the organization of the other in normal circumstances.' *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 209.

[2] Quoted by R. Redfield, *Tepoztlan, A Mexican Village*, p. 1: 'In Egypt at present, the new social order is deliberately attempting to bridge the gap between these two social strata. Many of the new legislations aim at minimizing disparities between citizens and at providing equal opportunities for all.'

[3] See Margaret Mead, 'Character Formation and Diachronic Theory', in *Social Structure*, p. 21.

[4] Melville J. Herskovits, 'The Processes of Cultural Change', in *Science of Man*, p. 144.

121 community marked with the lowest degree of isolation and homogeneity was characterized by the highest degree of individualization, secularization, and disorganization, and conversely.[1]

This hypothesis of the historical phases of culture change has stimulated other anthropologists to test it. Sol Tax, examining the hypothesis in the light of his Guatemalan data, was led to make a distinction between two aspects of culture that would cut across Redfield's framework. With regard to the world view and the beliefs about nature and man, the Guatemalan Indians are of the primitive type, while in their kind of social relations they are of the civilized type. He maintains that the interrelationships of the folk-life characteristics as found in Yucatan do not necessarily repeat themselves in every folk society. The Guatemalan Indians, unsophisticated, homogeneous in beliefs and practices, are mobile, having relationships of the impersonal type, with formal institutions dictating the acts of individuals, with familial organization weak, and with life secularized.[2]

It was also pointed out that Max Weber has shown how capitalistic commercialism could, and did, go hand in hand with piety in the case of the Protestants and the Puritans. Under certain conditions of literate, and at least partly urbanized, society, a culture may be both highly commercial and sacred as in the case of the Jewish history.[3]

177 In the light of these findings, Silwa community fits rather with Red-
[101] field's characteristics of the folk society. Silwa is a comparatively isolated community, as it lies at a distance of about thirty miles from both Edfu and Kom Ombo, the nearest urban centres to the north and south respectively, while more than seven hundred miles separates it from Cairo. On the other hand, it is less isolated than other village communities in the
[205] sense that there is a Post Office, a Railway Station (at which express
296 trains do not stop), as well as a Police Station. It is also less isolated in that it has a weekly market, to which people from surrounding villages
[343] and traders from nearby towns come to buy and sell their goods.

The villagers are, on the whole, relatively immobile, a phenomenon that
571 makes face to face relationships loom large in the folk society. The attachment to their locality is also associated with a sectional pride in their
[829] origin, which embraces the various villages of G'afra, and explains to them the differences between their customs and traditions and those of other regions. The villagers refer to themselves as well as to other Moslems by
[77] the term 'nation of Moslems' (ummat-al-muslimeen), and feel that they are Arabs first and foremost. One occasionally sees pictures of Imam Ali and his sons, Hassan and Hussein, Abu-zeid-al-Hilali, decorating some houses, especially of newly married couples. For the villagers, the world is

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[1] Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*, pp. 360, 362.

[2] Sol Tax, 'World View and Social Relations in Guatemala', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLIII, 1941, pp. 27–42.

[3] Robert Redfield, 'The Folk Society', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LII, 1947, p. 308.

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classified into believers and non-believers, on the basis of the Moslem faith, and they are hardly aware of concepts like race or class.

Silwa is to be considered basically as a folk community to the extent that human relations are not only of the personal, face to face type, but also familial. Social behaviour and mutual obligations are built upon the family relationship pattern, with regard to age, sex and status. Family relations are extended outwards to include the whole range of the community, and kinship bonds are the moral force behind village cohesion and group solidarity. Marriage, for instance, has its preferential bias towards cousins and relatives, and is an undertaking that implies the bringing together of two families. [582]

Together with the emphasis on the family, one adds, to specify the degree of folkhood in Silwa community, such items of behaviour as the observation of patriarchal authority and respect relationship between the old and the young, and the reciprocal rights and duties between kinsfolk.

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Moreover, sanctity and sacred sanctions lie at the foundation of a great deal of human activities and behaviour in the village; and ideally the sacred not only prevails over the profane, but sanctions and to some extent directs it. According to the villagers' view, 'life on this earth is like a farm, the harvest of which will be reaped in the next world'. Social acts and value judgment are grouped into two main religious categories: haram (forbidden) and halal (allowed), two words which have a distinctively religious flavour. Alongside the sanction of 'ar (social shaming) the notion of haram is another strong sanction for condemning a person who violates any of the prescriptions of the Koran or any moral or social norm.

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To introduce acts of piety or holy symbols into everyday life is the best means of producing 'baraka', to mention God's name at the beginning of the meal, to thank Him at the end of it, to elicit His help on travelling, to count by saying 'God is one, second to none, three, the Caliphs are four'—as such religious ritual invokes holiness—'baraka'. To engage in Koran reading and reciting and to be able to quote the sacred language of the Koran, the Tradition and the sayings of the pious ancestors, is a sublime and ennobling occupation. It is not surprising that the villagers' spirit is always captivated by the story of the woman who, whenever asked about any matter, always gave an answer by quoting from the Koran.[1]

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Cleanliness is envisaged mainly, not in terms of absence of dirt, but as the removal or absence of things that bring about religious impurity. To be in a state of valid ablutions is cleanliness, while the opposite is filthiness—'nagasa'. Attendance to such matters is more important than being clean or dirty in the secular, hygienic sense. Lustration as prescribed by the Koran, to wash one's private parts after evacuation, renders one clean and ready for saying one's prayers and is necessary for reading, reciting, or even touching the Koran. After sexual intercourse, husband and wife are enjoined to take a bath in a prescribed way, otherwise they are unclean. [514] [833]

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[1] See Appendix V for the full text of the story.

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771 Notions connected with life and death are, on the whole, mixed up with
761 religion. To die on holy days, such as Fridays or in the month of Ramadan,
[794] is a sign of God's blessing.

Sanctity shows itself also in status and rank and their role in the com-
771 munity. According to the villagers, the 'ashraf' (people of distinguished descent being related to the Prophet) have a better chance of salvation
554 than others, a notion which, of course, satisfies the villagers' ego as they
[793] consider themselves descendants of the Prophet. The persistence of the religious prerogatives of the 'ashraf' goes to show that the central concep-
[779] tion of Islam in the equality of all believers has not entirely supplanted the Arab reverence for distinguished genealogy.

771 The villagers' attitude of respect for religious men is based on two principles. The first is that of knowledge of Koranic studies, combined with
798 observation of religious duties; the second is derived from hereditary piety, as recognized piety is believed to be handed from father to son. The example of the two pious men acknowledged and venerated as such by the villagers is perhaps the best illustration. One of these two pious sheikhs
[776] is the son of the villagers' deceased saint around whose shrine the tombs
[778] of the villagers' cemetery is spread. As this sheikh does not live in the village, he frequently comes to it either for an ordinary visit, for taking
[764] part in settling serious disputes between individuals or families, or to collect his annual custom of crops offered to him by the villagers during harvest time. During his stay he moves from one guest house to another as the guest of a clan or a family which endeavours to provide hospitality for him and thus win his approval. In return, the sheikh is requested to
[788] write charms, or to bless water, or to read over a sick person, and thus secure his 'baraka'.[1]

The piety of the other religious man is based also on the fact that he is
[795] the grandson of a man who was one of the favourite disciples of the chief founder of the Nakshbadia mystic sect. His grandfather is reputed to have done miraculous deeds and had composed mystic verses usually recited amongst the members of the sect. His piety is also based on the grounds that he studied at al-Azhar Mosque and thus he is considered to be well versed in Koranic studies. It was because of his piety that he gained most of the votes in Silwa, when he stood as a candidate for the Parliament as mentioned earlier.

It is also recognized that people who know the sacred book by heart should be venerated as the carriers of knowledge, and many people regard them as possessed of 'baraka'. In Arab councils, religious men are always
[623] included, and their decisions are usually respected.

771 Moreover, the main events of life and death have their religious signifi-
[553] cance or at least their sanction. It is in the Prophet's tradition to celebrate
[304] the naming ceremony, to circumcise children, and to get them married.

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[581] [1] This sheikh died during my field work and a delegation from the village went to his village in condolence.

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It is not without significance that in ceremonies of circumcision and [304] marriage, the boy and the man have to visit the mosque in a ceremonial [585] way where dates and food are distributed. In praise of marriage, a villager [581] would quote the Prophet's saying, 'He who marries has perfected half his religious requirements, and he has only to fear God in the other half'. It is also worth stating that the majority of the personal names of both [551] sexes have some religious meaning or are the names of some religious personalities.

The importance of sacredness not only permeates those levels, justifying [261] acts and deeds, but also reaches the substance of living, namely, foodstuffs and bread, usually referred to as the 'sustenance of Islam' and which are considered to be sacred. A good harvest is a sign of God's approval; a torrent of rain which destroys the villagers' crops is a sign of [821] His disapproval. To impart holiness to the land before sowing, or to the [241] harvest before threshing, a sacrifice of an animal and the partaking of a [780] communal meal are desirable acts. According to the enlightened religious view, the villagers do not distinguish between pagan and the proper Islamic concepts. The village schoolmaster said that the belief in the power of saints, sorcery, and magic, and the appeal to divination and ritual for healing the sick as practised in the village, are complexly interwoven with [753] Islamic beliefs, but they are not in fact a part of the pure Faith.[1] It is believed that sickness might be inflicted by a saint for not fulfilling a vow taken in his name, or for not offering him his due customary gift and sacrifice. A great deal of treatment of disease and of acquiring of good luck could be achieved by prayers, sacred charms, and propitiation of saints. The strength of the religious force could be also ascertained from the [782] fact that the most binding guarantee for a promise is to swear by the name of Allah or to read the Fatiha. It is also customary for the villagers to take an oath sacrifice for God or a saint, which is a kind of conditional oath involving the slaying of an animal on the fulfilment of a certain task and the attendant danger that may ensue in the event of perjury.

The certainty and uniformity in religious beliefs and rituals specially [785] noted in the observance of the fasting month, is an index of the religious [794] group cohesiveness. All the villagers belong to the Maliki school of the Sunni tradition. Most of the adult villagers attend the Friday noon [782] prayers, and say their regular daily prayers either at home or in the mosque. There is a well-known Islamic tradition believed by the villagers that group prayers are more efficacious and rewarding than those said alone.

It is no exaggeration to say that the folk culture of the village is permeated [626] by religious sanctions and moral values derived from the Islamic traditions as revealed in the Koran and also infused with rituals and beliefs of an older tradition. It is not difficult to assert that there is hardly

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[1] See John Walker, *Folk Medicine in Modern Egypt*, London, 1934. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, *Amulets and Superstitions*, London, 1930.

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771 any difference or separation between religion and the rest of life. 'It is most true that, in the more remote communities, the behaviour expected of kinsmen rests under the warrant of ritual and religion. . . . In the villages, one behaves toward an older male cousin in accordance with that pattern of respect for elders and kinsmen, compliance with which people believe to be essential to virtue. . . . In the remoter villages, the uncontrovertible gravity of the relationship is announced to the individual again and again in the rituals of "paying respects" and of hand-washing. The plan for conduct . . . is a sacred plan, well documented with ritual and belief.'[1]

177 The folk life of Silwa as previously outlined provides the background and setting for a study of culture change in the Egyptian society as a whole. One can see that many of the trends of historical change follow to a considerable extent Redfield's hypothesis of the transformation of folk life into civilization. In reading Lane's description of Cairo life of over a century ago, before the full impact of Western techniques and civilization, one can identify more or less the same design of living in Cairo as exists at present in Silwa.[2] Throughout the book the reader notices in the mid nineteenth century Cairo society, the all-pervading religious frame of reference mingled with magical rites; the importance of such institutions as the family, the abundance of folk medicine, attitudes towards authority, age and sex, similar to those held and observed at present in isolated communities such as Silwa.

177 369 However, this does not mean that Silwa has not been itself changing, as evidenced by statements from the older generation and observed by the writer himself. The trend on the whole is towards imitating the city pattern of life, especially in its material aspects. A common saying, especially amongst the youth, is 'If you want wealth and elevation, go and live in the cities, for poverty is the heritage of rural life'. Yet what the villagers of Silwa want and have started to imitate is not the Europeanized type of city dwellers but the Arab section of city dwellers. No one in Silwa has ever entertained the idea of wearing a European dress. Some of the new [291] generation and those who have been to town might wear a smaller turban, manufactured shoes instead of the hand-made markoob, a manufactured woollen galabia, or tob instead of the zabout woven on the village loom. On special occasions they imitate the city way of cooking their vegetables [252] and meat, using tomato juice instead of the traditional way of boiling and spicing it.

177 369 554 [519] The imitation of city ways is to a large extent connected with prestige values. Two clans have, for instance, incorporated a latrine in their guest houses, imitating the Omda of the village, while there is none in their own houses. On festival and religious occasions, it is always desirable for a clan or a family to invite a Koran reciter from town even if his voice is not as

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[1] Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*, p. 229.

[2] Edward William Lane, *Customs and Manners of Modern Egyptians*.

good as the village reciter, this being justified on the grounds that the 'village girl is always one-eyed'. Introduction of cash crops like sugar-cane and cotton has caught on for the same reasons as landlords who can afford to live in the city grow such crops. Emulation of city standards for social prestige is obvious in the example of those few people who whitewashed their houses mainly on the outside but seldom inside, in contrast to the dark grey colour of mud, the ordinary house coating. The same whitewash with inscriptions from the Koran concerning pilgrimage, crude paintings of camels, and mahmal procession also form the outside decoration of the houses of pilgrims made immediately after their return from Mecca. 177 369 554 [248] [249] [342] [788]

While some articles of men's wear or some parts of their speech have been affected by city ways, women's dress and language have hardly been affected at all. This is partly due to their relative restriction of movement and travel compared with men. On some occasion, there was a commotion in the village concerning the spread of city headgear among the women. This led to their nightly itinerary to fill their jars from the Nile being stopped for a while, as the men complained that women made it an occasion for displaying their colourful headgear. 177 369 [562] [291]

The villagers appreciate the fact that city dwellers are much more inclined to mind their own business and engage in no gossip. Their attitude towards gossip is, however, paradoxical. It is considered sinful to talk about somebody behind his back; the Koran condemns it, and the Prophetic Tradition warns against it as 'gossip eats up the good deeds as the fire eats up wood'. Much of the village preacher's advice in the Friday sermon is on the avoidance of gossip and the use of the human tongue which could be like the scorpion's tail. Yet on the other hand, the villagers in their formal and informal gatherings occupy themselves with talking about the doings, the problems, the quarrels, and the general business of other people. They will tell you that they are engaged in just having a mouthful of words, or just chewing the cud. It is well known that gossip is almost an institution in rural areas, partly informative, partly interpretive, and on the whole functions as a means of social control and a medium for the formation of public opinion. In this connection, my informant Ali told me that townspeople have more scope for piety, as the occasions for gossip do not arise as among the people of Silwa. [521] [626] [208]

One of the main things that a small number of enlightened villagers are aware of is the fact that in the cities people can find more religious enlightenment as to what are the principles of pure religion in distinction from religion mixed with pre-Islamic customs (Jahilyia), which they think are prevalent in the village. On enquiring about examples of the supremacy of the chances of the city dwellers over the villagers in this respect, most of the information elicited concerned religious ritual. Ali, as well as other persons, stated that *city people know how to perform their ablutions better*, how to say their prayers in a more acceptable way, and have no mourning [771] [788]

777 369 [788] [779] customs like the people in Silwa. The visiting priest who comes yearly to the village is certainly welcome on his arrival, and people flock to him for advice on religious matters. On attending one of these meetings, the writer was struck by the number of questions that those present put to him concerning the details of prayers, e.g. whether one lifts his hand up to his shoulder or up to his ears, how one sits on after prostration, what one might say before and after prayers. Other questions that arose were queries about whether certain sayings or deeds were considered to be religiously approved or disapproved, how and to whom one would make a sacrifice oath, whether visiting saints' tombs is a good thing or not, and so forth.

[796] [574] Village life, on the whole, whether in religious or social spheres, is very ritually and ceremonially conscious, and almost invulnerable on this level. Greeting, hospitality, eating, praying, exchange of social obligations, circumcision, marriage, and dozens of items of life are shrouded with ritual and traditional prescriptions. My informant, Mahmoud, told me that after a sermon given by a preacher coming from the city, who told the [764] villagers that their customs practised on the death of a person were non-Islamic, they took a vow not to practise them any more. Yet the adherence to the oath was made for some six months, after which people gradually relapsed to their traditional ways, with the only exception that women were allowed to follow the deceased as far as the southern end of the village instead of going on to the cemetery as had been the practice hitherto.

753 The extent of social change on the folkhood of the village could be also examined in the villagers' ideas about sickness and disease which are mixed with ritual and religious beliefs. Disease, it is supposed, can be caused either by failure to fulfil some religious ritual or ceremony, such as a financially able man not performing his pilgrimage, or the failure to give the promised offerings to a saint, or providing a naming ceremony for a [756] new-born baby. If saints are suspected as the cause of the disease, usually a woman known to be the guardian of that particular saint, or upon whom saints descend, would be consulted to tell whether the family has broken or forgotten a sacrificial custom. If no special saint has been offended, [755] then bread could be specially baked and distributed as a 'karama' amongst people after the Friday prayer, asking God to relieve the sick.

[754] [751] Sickness can also be caused by the evil eye, and in such cases a learned man is asked to recite verses from the Koran or write a charm (higab) to be worn by the sick person as a prophylactic safeguard as well as a means of treatment. Certain diseases like paralysis are believed to be caused by [776] the evil red wind emanating from the touch of jinn; an epileptic is also a person who is mounted and obsessed by jinn who usually haunt deserted places, wells, and high spots in the mountains. Curiously enough, tuberculosis is believed to be caused by pretence and social conceit.

Moreover, a sickness is considered as God's test for the endurance and patience of the faithful. As the faithful are always exposed to affliction, their faith in God should never be shaken, and hence their endurance of sickness is a pious deed. It is often told to a sick person that holy people 753 have suffered from one ailment or another and have endured it willingly for God.

All this shows how the villagers' traditional notions about health and sickness are mixed with magical and religious beliefs; God is the afflicter as well as the healer; it is He who has fixed the life span of every person, and [761] this cannot be lengthened or precipitated by a second, much less a minute, unless He wills it. Together with this, there is the belief that hope and propitiation cannot fail to produce some expected results in certain crises [782] of life.

The village has experienced some measure of direct contact with modern 743 medicine as a result of the establishment of a health unit by the Ministry 777 of Health in 1936. This health unit is a wonderful building, situated on the southern border of the village, and is composed of a maternity section, an isolation ward, and a general section. It cost the Government about £E3,000, yet it has never functioned properly or systematically as doctors who came to it could hardly endure life in the village for more than six months, whereupon they tried every possible means to be transferred to towns. The villagers appreciated the health unit at the beginning, but their resentment to it was ironically aroused during the malaria and typhoid epidemic of 1943 on the grounds that sick people were taken away [164] to the isolation ward, and dying away from one's relatives and home is the [761] worst thing that can happen to any person. Their hostility towards it is expressed with reference to its unfortunate location, it being near the cemetery; thus going to the health unit has become psychologically a bad omen. However, the establishment of the health unit has given folk-medicine 757 the greatest challenge, and at present the villagers are becoming increasingly interested in medicine as such, alongside their usual traditional cures. 777 In serious cases the doctor's help is usually sought besides the traditional cures, and it is becoming a sign of social prestige to bring him into the home of the sick; but remaining in hospital for treatment or isolation for contagious diseases is still resisted.

Although one finds that the villagers have adopted certain items of 177 material culture from the town, such as the use of manufactured goods, 369 new types of vegetables, and some medicines, such adoption is a surface substitution. Their ideas about land ownership, the importance of children, family and clan solidarity, categories of respect relationships, sex dichotomy, supernatural sanctions, and the importance of ritual and ceremony in both social and religious life, remain almost unaltered.

There is, however, one feature in the village's social life that has undergone a certain amount of change as a result of changes in the economic 178 conditions, and that is the role and function of leadership. Till very 622 recently leadership has been mainly connected with families owning large 645 plots of land; and such families assumed the responsibility and obligation 648 for receiving guests from outside the village, providing hospitality for

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178 622 642 [625] municipal or provincial government officials, and representing the village in government affairs. The Omda of the village is elected on the basis of his land property, and has been the symbol of authority and responsibility on behalf of the village. Now, with the establishment of a police station, with the availability of more people who can write out complaints, with the decrease of the wealth of the village Omda, and consequently with his inability to provide hospitality in the traditional way, or to represent the village properly without extending his hands for help from the village, his authority has been flouted and people tend to send their complaints and disputes directly to the police station or to the provincial authorities. They complain that the Omda is not what he used to be in the good old days, responsible for reception and accommodation of government officials, generous to chance travellers, or to the needy poor.[1] In a conversation between the writer and the Omda, the latter answered the villagers' allegations by saying 'If the Omda or any other man in his position would stick to what these people expect from his generosity, he would run the risk of complete bankruptcy'. The decrease of the headman's authority reveals itself in the local remarks such as 'We have an Omda without land', or expressing their dissatisfaction with regard to some unsettled disputes, the villagers would say 'It is a village without an Omda'.

[554] By the weakening of his position, the Omda has lost prestige and people compare him with his powerful and domineering predecessor 'during whose days no one could open his mouth' and 'no children could play about'. In fact, this brings us to the personal qualities of the present Omda who is actually a pleasant and genial personality. But the people think of authority as necessarily involving an assertion of power and domination. For the same reason people praised my informant Mahmoud when he was in office as head of the ghafeers. If one wields power, one must be powerful and forceful, the villagers say, otherwise one would not be respected and feared. Gibb and Bowen mentioned something similar to this attitude towards authority in the Arab provinces in the Ottoman Empire during the eighteenth century. Al-Jabarti wrote: 'If the peasants were administered by a compassionate multazim, they despised him and his agents, delayed payment of his taxes, called him by feminine names. . . .' The prevalence of such a conception of authority confers privilege and prerogatives and is enforced upon the minds of the people by long centuries of misrule and oppression, supplemented by the religious habits of stoicism, passing into fatalism.[2]

178 642 The weakening of the role of leadership in the village is one of the main complaints that one quite often hears, either with regard to the prestige of the Omda, or with respect to the influence of the Arab councils or the relationship between the older and younger people. With disputes referred

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[504] [432] [361]

[1] The tradition of hospitality in the village leads to the fact that bread and milk cannot be sold on a commercial basis without bringing shame to the seller. This tradition still persists while that connected with selling of milk is less rigidly observed.

[2] H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part 1, p. 205.

to and decided by a Government superior to local sanctions, the esteem of 178
local institutions has been undermined and the traditional structure of 642
authority has lost some of its grip.

If the villagers have increasingly resorted to Government procedures in
their disputes, they still consider both Government and Government 641
officials as agencies of imposition and control, and hence to be feared. The 177
identification of any Effendi wearing European suit and fez with a policeman is indicative of the role of the Government in the people's mind. The first strong impact of centralized Government was probably during the reign of Mohammed Ali, when its pressures were felt through conscription, the rigid collection of taxes, and the registration of land. For a long time in Egypt this apprehension held towards the Government was connected with education, since education and conscription were associated during the days of Mohammed Ali, while hitherto war had been the business of a certain caste and farmers were not concerned with it. The fear of Government authorities is reflected in the story of the old man in the village who had been very annoyed and did not speak to his son for a long time because the latter was entangled in a dispute for which the father had to be called to the police station to give evidence. The father considered his going to the police station as a humiliation brought to him by his son.

It is also considered as a betrayal to report cases of infectious diseases to 641
the authorities, as this would cause trouble to the family by involving the [744]
father and the mother in governmental queries and procedures. To keep
away from governmental institutions was always the safest policy. An 655
example of this is the failure of the branch of the Agricultural Credit Bank
established in 1938 to help the farmers to have their crops secured, to 641
borrow money accordingly, and thus to rescue them from falling a prey to usury. The bank has been in fact mainly used by outside crop merchants to buy crops from the village and store them until prices improved. It only functioned to its full capacity during the last war when governmental legislation compelled every farmer to sell part of his crop to
the Government according to the land he cultivated. The villagers have [558]
never taken to the benefits of the bank, partly because it involved becom- [779]
ing implicated with Government procedures, and partly because it implied
loss of prestige, due to dealing with interest, which is religiously forbidden. [453]
For the same reason, life insurance is never entertained by the villagers,
nor by a great section of the Egyptian society as a whole, partly because [456]
it involves interest, as well as because it presents a challenge to man's destiny. In 1950 the branch of the bank in the village had to be closed down. Yet this does not mean that usury is not practised amongst the
villagers in Silwa in spite of being condemned by the Koran, although it [426]
is not widespread and is avoided as much as possible.[1]

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[1] M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, in talking about the Koranic prohibition of 'riba' (increase, interest) in Moslem society remarks that 'it was in that very society . . . that

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641 Thus it is obvious that most of the Government institutions have not 177 yielded the results expected from them in the village. So far the health unit, the agricultural bank, and the compulsory school have proved to be failures. This is mainly attributed to the lack of co-operation from the villagers as a result of the clash between their traditional views and practices and the new institutions, the purposes of which have never been explained or made comprehensible to the villagers.

178 It is appropriate here also to mention the ideal of hospitality which has been affected by the process of social change. The villagers regret the 574 waning of the idea of hospitality defined in terms of ability to render it 554 when the occasion arises. Hospitality is conceived also in terms of offering food to guests, relatives, or casual *en route* visitors to the village. It also [556] involves distributing wealth on ceremonial occasions such as circumcision and wedding, the failure of which would subject a person to severe [431] criticism. To be able to conform to these standards is one of the chief attributes of authority, prestige, self-respect, and social recognition. The [156] ideal personality type, alongside with the pious man, is the hospitable man. The common saying runs: 'He who is hospitable will never suffer in this world.' The hospitable person should offer without being asked, and should insist when the receiver is reluctant to accept; otherwise his hospitality is like that of the boatmen—who, being uncertain of their food resources, cannot be hospitable. By offering hospitality a person in fact creates bonds between himself and the partakers, where the latter respond in terms of respect, service, reciprocal hospitality, or at least prayers, in [556] the case of the poor. The ideal is certainly that of giving away, and not of accumulating. Those who accumulate without giving are described as 'rotting', or like the 'cord that holds the knickers'—implying that they are insignificant and socially unworthy of recognition.

178 This gradual dwindling of hospitality, so much deplored by the vil- 574 lagers, is mainly due to the fact that there are few families in the village who can afford to adopt the traditional ideal. This is certainly a result of the change in the economic structure of the village due to the constant division of land and the increase in population. Moreover, with increasing [369] contacts with city ways, the villagers are more aware of the importance of money and the personal benefits derived from its purchasing power; and [556] the recognition attached to hospitality, though upheld and valued as an ideal, is offset by the new acquisitive spirit. In this connection, my informant, Ali, told me that in the good old days if a visitor expressed his [431] appreciation of an object or a utensil, the host usually offered it to him, but this is no longer the general rule. The spirit, however, still persists in the case of a woman visitor who, for instance, admires the tea offered to

[426] there developed, in the 9th and 10th centuries, the banking institutions and commercial customs which were to become those of Europe, and which are quite inconsistent with the Quranic Law'. *Muslim Institutions* (translated from the French), London, 1950, pp. 190–1.

her whereupon her hostess usually wraps some dry tea to take with her, 178
and the same might happen in the case of a pot or a jar which could be [574
spared, being given to the admirer. The spirit of giving away is also
reflected in the often-heard word 'itfaddal' (you may have it), which [431]
Egyptians in general say when a person admires any of the articles of [556]
clothes, food, or any possessions.

The loosening of respect relationships is reflected in the attitude of 178
some people with regard to the learned men and the so-called 'Koran- 554
carriers'. Their absolute authority is dwindling, and one occasionally hears
criticism of their knowledge compared to the 'ulema of the town. One
villager once dubbed them as good for nothing except for eating during
the ceremonies.

On the whole, people who have stayed for a long time working in town 178
show a great deal of dissatisfaction with the village way of life. Although 369
the majority of them feel obliged to send money to their parents, relatives,
families and children, they resent the excessive demands of their relatives,
and claim that towns people are free from such demands. One of the people
who was working in Cairo complained to the writer that his relatives,
who were supposed to be responsible for his land and sheep, did not
attend to them properly while he was away. He continued, 'They only want
you to give them tea and gifts on your return, and turn their backs
on finding that you have not brought what they expect from you'.

The impact of urban life with its increasing pressures on the village has
resulted in more and more strains in social living. The traditional social 178
structure based on the solidarity of family and clan is losing some of its
cohesive forces. The absolute authority of the old folks had been supreme,
and no competition between old and young could ever be entertained.
Now, the exception is not rare. The prestige and authority based on land
property have also been questioned and is expressed in the common saying
'The beans are given to those who have no teeth'. With the social controls
based on authority of age, power vested in the Arab councils, prestige of [626]
learned men in the village, go the clash between the ideal of hospitality
and economic acquisitiveness, the emphasis on family rather than the clan,
and a vague search for minding one's own business.

One meets, however, those few individuals who have spent part of their 369
life in the city, criticizing some of the village ways of life such as pride in
the clan or the extended family; they praise wealth rather than generosity,
and individualism than family ties. Such persons are pitied by their rela-
tives as 'being influenced by the life of "being away" ghurba' or as
having 'an eye on Paradise and another on Hell'. In other words, such [828]
expressions are the villagers' way of describing 'the marginal man'.[1]

Such changes of social attitudes, together with the increasing pressures 182
of economic conditions, have created an atmosphere of insecurity and 178

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[1] See Everett Stonequist, *The Marginal Man, A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict*, New York, 1937.

182 178 anxiety, weakening the stability that obtained in the traditional social structure. My informant, Mahmoud, told me once, 'If the present people of Silwa find you writing a complaint to the Government against somebody, they will spontaneously offer their signature or their stamp without asking you about the nature of the complaint, or even against whom'. He went on to say, 'These people never learn a lesson. God sent them the malaria epidemic followed by the torrent that swept their harvest, but they never guard against God's anger, and they will go on eating each other's flesh.'

155 Such insecurity and anxiety is bound to have its repercussions upon the children as they grow up. Hearing remarks of dissatisfaction about the environment and the people in general from their elders, the children themselves feel insecure and become more suspicious.

178 To sum up, the folk life of the village has certainly undergone a certain amount of change from the point of view of what some anthropologists call the material culture, and the instruments of living. The villagers, for instance, are more familiar with pecuniary values and commercial transactions. More often than not, borrowing money at present is accompanied [426] by writing a receipt, while hitherto this was considered to be a social disgrace. Even at present, some creditors hand over the receipt to a third person to keep it as a sign of his reluctance to accept a written bond. Like Chan Kom, however, commercialism has not entered the primary family. The writer has not heard of sisters or brothers living together doing business with each other on a commercial basis, and it is almost inconceivable of a father hiring his son, or a son his father.[1]

It is obvious that the villagers are keen to accept and imitate the [369] material symbols of city life, and it is on the material level that the folk culture of the village has been relatively more exposed to the processes of social change. On the other hand, social structure and organization and values have not changed very much. Apart from the few unsatisfied deviants, the conceptual and social orientation of the village folk life still holds valid as the same principles that have guided conduct, behaviour, and relationships are still maintained. In this pattern of folk living, the focal point is undoubtedly religion, as it continues to be the validating force [182] of life, explaining it, and providing people with their major intellectual and emotional satisfactions and dissatisfactions in coping with the problems of life.

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[1] Robert Redfield, *A Village that Chose Progress* (*Chan Kom Revisited*), p. 66.

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Chapter Four

BIRTH, INFANCY AND EARLY TRAINING

PREGNANCY and giving birth are perhaps the most important events 843 in a married woman's life, and therefore the characteristics and [842] symptoms of pregnancy are easily recognized in the female circles in the village. Unless otherwise stated most of the information given in this [115] chapter has been supplied by a female relative of the writer. The informant divided the period of pregnancy into three main stages:

The first is the month of secrecy (al shahr al sirry) when, at the stopping of menstruation, the woman realizes that she is going to conceive. The news should be kept a secret from all except the closest family circle. If any neighbours or visitors should enquire about it, it should be positively [753] denied. This atmosphere of secrecy should be kept up as long as possible for fear of the evil eye. It is believed that at this early stage the embryo is more susceptible to the influences of the evil eye than at any other stage.

In the second month, the woman may declare, still with reluctance, that she is heavy, or carrying (thagila or hāmil). During this month it is said she is prone to feel dizzy (daikha), and is much inclined to stretch and sleep readily. It is believed that during this period also God starts shaping the prospective baby; consequently a pregnant woman should not be awakened by anybody if she is asleep, lest such disturbance hamper or interfere with the process of creation. Children's congenital defects or [826] abnormalities, e.g. six fingers, split lip, bulging forehead, are attributed to the fact that the mother's sleep was disturbed during this period.

The third important stage is that of craving (waham) which is experienced by the woman during the third and fourth months. During this stage the pregnant woman is allowed free and wider choice in her food. She is demanding articles of food which she 'craves for' continually, and they are usually items that are rare or at least not within everyday access, [262] e.g. melons, fruit, savouries and the like. Eating is supposed to stand her in good stead during the ordeal of pregnancy and birth.

The husband must do his best to provide his wife with what she craves for, otherwise he would be socially disparaged by his wife's family. It is a [626] common theme in village gossip to refer to a woman who is always strain-

[P.86 is blank]

843 ing her husband's finances, especially in her demand for food rarities, as [626] 'a woman permanently in the craving period'. The pregnant woman's desires also provide a testing ground for neighbourliness and reciprocity when she sends one of her family to 'borrow' something for her. Neighbours are expected to meet such requirements if they have been approached, while at the same time they are usually requested not to spread the news. This could also be regarded as an occasion to announce the expected baby to the neighbours, who might be asked to help at a later stage.

In the 'craving period' the wife asserts her desires over her husband, and [593] with it goes an assertion of the matrilineal side over the patrilineal authority. The gifts and attention centred around the pregnant woman by the husband and his people indicate some cultural balance and provide a psychological outlet to the normal husband-wife pattern of relationship. The ideology of a patriarchal community has to concede a certain amount of tolerance for the satisfaction of its fervent sentiment towards the offspring.

Apart from the whims that should be satisfied, the craving woman is warned against showing fear or expressing ridicule or criticism for anybody, as the embryo might be moulded in the image of the person feared, ridiculed or criticized. On the other hand, she is encouraged to show appreciation for children. On seeing a child in its mother's arms, the craving woman expresses her admiration for it, whereupon the suckling mother would wish her to have one like it or better.

By the middle of the fifth lunar month, when the woman's abdomen usually becomes large, it is taken to mean that the child is well developed, and that the mother can resume her normal work. Relatives and neighbours can come and visit her, wishing her to bear a boy, or whatever God wills! Up to the ninth month, nothing more significant happens except the preparation of the proper food for the forthcoming event. Food [431] presents, especially from the patrilineal side, are sent to the home, e.g. molasses, clarified butter and sugar. The women members may invite a [789] fortune-teller to give them some tidings, and dreams might be told also in connection with the expected baby.

The extent of the desire of women for children can be gauged by the 841 multifarious devices to which they resort to induce pregnancy. A woman who does not bear children is called 'akir'—one who literally 'kills' her offspring; and the woman who has stopped bearing is referred to as 'mushahira'—being 'bound' or literally affected (in some way) by the moon. The following methods are used as aids to pregnancy in both cases:

Crossing the Nile in a boat is one of the ways of 'freeing the chaining' of a woman. It symbolizes the fact that she is moving from one state to another. She might visit a faraway saint, taking some food with her and [788] filling her dish with some of the sand from the saint's grave to sprinkle over her body on her return.

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The carrying out of a 'kaboos'—presenting oneself uninvited, secretly 842
and suddenly at a 'place'—is another device to induce pregnancy. An old woman, or a young non-menstruating girl, is asked to collect some maize seeds from seven married women, who have been the only wives of their husbands. The old woman puts the maize into a pot to be cooked in the oven overnight. The woman who desires to become pregnant goes to visit, as if unexpected, the old woman, who presents her with the pot to walk over seven times, and then washes her private parts with the water at home.

Sometimes a woman desirous of pregnancy pawns her jewellery to a woman who is not menstruating, and asks her to put it underneath her pillow while sleeping for some nights. This woman does so and then puts the jewels in a pot filled with water. The first woman comes to visit her and to step over the pot seven times, followed by a wash similar to the previous one.

In the case of a newly-married girl who does not conceive, the ceremony of marriage is often re-enacted in the house but on a smaller scale by non-menstruating women in the same way as during the actual ceremony. The wife makes two dolls, one representing herself, and another the bridegroom. Only female friends and relatives are invited and the doll bride and bridegroom are tucked up in bed. This is supposed to relieve the wife from the first marriage shock which may have caused her inability to conceive.[1]

These are a few examples of the ways to which women resort for 842
inducing pregnancy, and they all imply producing a psychological state 154
for the attainment of release and embodying the sublime folly of hope
found in magical rites.[2] In such practices, one can regard the connection
between economic fertility symbols (earth, maize, jewellery, sand, water)
and women's fertility as some survivals of reincarnation beliefs. Although
in some of these practices one might get the impression of an atonement
for a woman's evil intention (sense of guilt), the emphasis, as I gathered [053]
from my informants, was the 'evil eye' of others or their manœuvres to
cause such sterility or 'binding'. Out of the sixteen methods collected, ten
of them explicitly indicate accusation of others for such a state, a mechanism which some psychologists call 'projecting repressed hostility'.

Although a pregnant woman is theoretically advised not to work hard 844
or carry heavy things during the ninth month, one often hears of women [843]
in childbirth who have just returned from the Nile (*i.e. water-carrying*),

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[1] According to Frazer's analysis of magic, this could be considered as imitative magic, 089
by performing what one desires to happen in actuality. To the same category belongs the
taboo on pregnant women, especially after the seventh month, with regard to spinning, as [843]
the child might get entangled in her womb. In Silwa, contagious magic also exists in the
so-called 'taking the smell of somebody' (riha), especially in cases of harm done through [055]
the evil eye, where a part of the 'envier's' clothes is taken and burnt with salt, to dispel
his or her evil effects.

[2] B. Malinowski, 'Magic, Science and Religion', in *Science, Religion and Reality*, edited by J. A. Needham, London, 1936.

844 or from a visit, to give birth without undue pain. However, immediately
[843] the birth-pangs are felt, close female relatives are called upon, and soon
the house teems with other women coming to offer their help. It should
be mentioned here that while during pregnancy the husband's relatives
[843] are expected to show more interest than the wife's, the actual event of
birth is one of the obligations of the matrilineal side. It is natural that in
the case of the first-born child the event of birth is attended to by the
[591] mother and her relatives, as the woman is still in her matrilocal residence.
If she has left it for any reason, she usually moves back to her mother's
home to be attended to there, or the mother would be immediately called
upon if her daughter is in her husband's house.

Thirty years ago the village had no official midwife (dayah), but since
then a certificated woman has been responsible for deliveries. It is the
members of the same family, however, who have been performing the
functions of midwifery. The profession of a midwife is not a coveted one,
as the midwife must be a woman 'who cannot be shamed'.[1] Like very old
women, the midwife is a 'mukabila' who can meet men face to face, talk
[834] to any man and walk in the streets without hiding her face. This might be
also explained by the fact that the midwife is a woman engaged in an
'unclean' task, for a woman who is giving birth is considered to be
'unclean'. Yet in some cases the midwife is not called upon for birth,
especially if a qualified woman exists in the family.

For delivery, the pregnant woman is seated on three stones, a proverbial
position for anxiety and pain as expressed in the common saying 'Like a
woman sitting on the stones'. The mother usually supports the back,
while two other women each hold a leg and another two hold the out-stretched arms. The usual birth-pangs are accompanied by requests of
help from saints, especially 'Assayid al Badawi' who is the recognized
saint to be called upon to 'widen the straits'. The after-birth is thrown out
at night 'to be eaten by the dogs', the purpose fathering a wish that the
woman would bear as many children as the bitch bears puppies—(dogs
[825] being known for their proliferousness).[2]

The child's first cry is interpreted as his reaction to his coming from
'the wide to the narrow'.[3] He is immediately swaddled in old washed
clothes belonging to the father or mother. The mother's jewellery, which
had been taken off before delivery, is now put beside the child, as a gesture
that the mother is no longer a mere bride (in the case of the first child), but
[851] a mother whose child is more valuable to her than her jewels. In the case
of a boy, other objects are put alongside, such as scissors and a sheathed

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[1] It is perhaps because of her duty, the sex taboo is not enjoined upon her.

[2] For the belief in the importance of the placenta as a survival of the ancient Egyptian belief, see Seligman, 'Ancient Egyptian Beliefs in Modern Egypt', in *Essays and Studies presented to William Ridgeway*, Cambridge University Press, 1913, pp. 451–2.

[3] The women villagers' explanation seems to be in line with what some psycho-analysts call the 'birth-trauma'.

knife and an antimony stick. The child's eyes are treated with kohl as a protection against 'running eyes'. 844 [051]

The navel cord is cut to a repetitive refrain. In the case of a boy, relatives would be singing:

'Who supports his father
except him who descends from his loins,
May your legs be fit for the stirrup, [533]
and your mouth for an answer.'

For a girl they sing only one line:

'She will make her father enter into the shade! (i.e. into the cool)
and she will visit him every day!'

The most dangerous period for the newly-born child and his mother is 846 'the first forty days'. This is the period of confinement for the mother as she is considered to be 'unclean' and cannot cook, wash or even say her prayers. She is called 'nafasia' (breathing woman) as if her breath were [183] not clean, and this is the reason for her seclusion, as well as segregation from the rest of the household. She should take care of herself; she is advised not to move too much or to go out in the dark. She is usually fed on chicken, chicken broth, clarified butter, molasses and other richly [862] prepared dishes. She again becomes the centre of attention with respect to food given to her.

On the other hand, the first forty days are regarded as 'the angelic [776] period' for the child. He is guarded by angels against the 'evil spirits'. Yet the mother must remain in close proximity to the child, never leaving him alone, because if for any reason the angels were to neglect their guardianship, the child would be besieged by the devils. If the mother has to leave the child for a short time, someone else must attend to him.

The next event in connection with the new baby is the official declaration 553 of his name on the seventh day from his birth or sometimes at the end of the fortnight. For this purpose, a special ceremony is held called 'sobou' (related to the week). According to the village tradition the ceremony has a religious sanction from one of the sayings of the Prophet. It is almost universal in the village with regard to the naming of the first son, but less common with the succeeding sons. The most important [780] feature in the content of the ceremony is the killing of a yearling ram (ikk), and thus causing the blood to flow, over which the baby is passed seven times. 'Blood flowing' is supposed to ward off the effects of the 'evil eye'. [055] It is also considered as a sacrifice for the child's life, saving the child's life by giving the life of an animal. The traditional support for this is the story [782] of the Prophet Abraham whose son Ishmael was saved by a heaven-sent ram.[1] Such a ritual is always recommended on the occasion of

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[1] Ishmael according to the Koran, Isaac according to the Old Testament.

553 acquiring new things, e.g. building a new house, reaping new harvest,
782 obtaining new land. Though there is no formal ceremony in Artas (Palestine)
for the naming of the child, Hilma Granqvist refers to the notion of 'the
flowing of the blood' in the same way as believed in Silwa, the purpose
being that life redeems life.[1]

782 At other major events of an individual's life, like circumcision, marriage, pilgrimage, completion of memorizing the Koran, the blood must flow to bring about blessing (baraka).

553 However, at the end of the meal, the oldest member present, or a
religious man, asks what the child's name is, and on being told, such a
name would be praised by the meeting. The reading of the 'Fatiha'
788 (similar to the Lord's Prayer) would end the ceremony with prayers for
the child's long and happy life.

The name is usually chosen by the parents, and with the first child, the
name of the grandfather for a boy, or grandmother for a girl, is frequently
decided upon. Granqvist has discussed at great length the significance and
implications in choice of names, and it is felt unnecessary to dwell therefore
551 on these points here.[2] In this connection, it is reported as a prophetic
tradition that 'the best names are those which are similar to the Prophet's
names or indicate the subservience to God'. The whole range of names
could be classified into four categories: (1) those similar to the Prophet's
names, reported to be thirty-three in number, e.g. Mohammad, Mahmoud,
Kamil, Mustafa, Ahmad, Taha, Yaseen; those related to his family either
male or female; names of the Well-Guided Caliphs. Examples of names of
females connected with the Prophet are: Amina (Prophet's mother),
Halima (wet-nurse), Aisha, Khadiga (wives). (2) Names indicating
'Servant of God', and this lends itself to ninety-nine names which are the
attributes of God, e.g. Abd-el Rahman (Servant of the Compassionate),
Abd-el Rahim (Servant of the Merciful), Abd-el Wahhab (Servant of the
Giver). (3) Names of other prophets, e.g. Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa
(Moses), Isa (Jesus), Solaiman (Solomon). (4) Modern names, usually an
369 imitation of the city names, which do not belong to any of the previous
categories: Muhsin, Fouad, Nawal, Sabah.

On the whole, the name is usually connected with some meaning or fathering a wish. The writer was told about a certain man in the village whose children used to die during the first year because it was alleged they had attractive names; as a safeguard against this he decided to call his future children by unusual names, e.g. Malaz (pot), Shwal (sack), so that they would not be envied, and thus survive. He appears, according to my informant, to have succeeded thereby in raising children.

553 In contrast with those in Artas in Palestine (the Arab village studied by Granqvist), the names in Silwa are never changed after the ceremony, and it would be considered a great disgrace to do so. This difference is probably

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[1] Hilma Granqvist, *Child Problems among the Arabs*, p. 131.

[2] Ibid., pp. 1–30.

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Silwa

due to the fact that there is no formal ceremony for the naming in Artas, 553
as in Silwa, and hence the change is easier.

Since the enforcement of registration of births about forty years ago, 656
the child is registered after the ceremony. It is to be remembered that
still-births are not registered, and are never buried in the cemetery, but 845
always below the threshold of the house.

The mother takes no active part in all the ceremony activities, as she
is not allowed to move from her room of confinement until forty days have 846
elapsed. As mentioned earlier, the child is considered to be guarded
throughout this period by the angels, who talk to him, entertain him, and [776]
sometimes tease or even annoy him. This is the explanation of the baby's
occasional smiles, as well as cries. He smiles because the angels have told [827]
him that his father is alive, and cries when they inform him that his father
has died.

By the end of the forty days, the mother finishes her period of confinement
and is considered to be in full control of the baby. She can move
about with him and resume her ordinary domestic tasks as she becomes [783]
ceremonially clean after having her first bath, a kind of ritual cleansing.

The end of this confinement means the gradual introduction of the 846
child to the wider family circles by taking it on visits to relatives or thee 851
visiting the house with presents. If the mother takes the child to any house, 431
the child is never expected to leave empty-handed. Whether near or
distant relatives, or of no blood connection at all, they always give the
child presents varying from salt, dates, a loaf of bread, an egg, to money
and more valuable things. On the birth of the first child the paternal
grandfather cannot see his grandson without sending a ram or a goat
before his arrival.

Another step is the introduction of the newly-born boy to the other boys 851
in the neighbourhood. For this purpose the mother prepares a dish of 846
boiled maize or wheat and sugar, called 'balila', and taking her child,
accompanied by the children of the neighbourhood, repairs to some
elevated land to eat the food. For this occasion the mother dresses in new
scented clothes. For the first time also, the child wears new clothes, consisting
of a white undergarment covered by a striped one, thus discarding
his mother's or father's old wrappings. 858

It is socially encouraged that both a woman and a man should give rein 841
to their intense desire for children. The main function of marriage is to [183]
have children and thus perpetuate family life. This shows itself in one of
the condolatory phrases addressed to any offspring on the occasion of their [581]
father's death: 'He who has left successors is not dead.' My informant,
Ali, said, 'A childless couple will have no "successors" to read the
"Fatiha" for their souls after their death and their name will thus end by
their departure from this world. Children are really useful, not only in
this world but in the world hereafter. The Prophet (on whom be the peace
and blessings of God) said, "Get married and multiply, as I shall take

858 pride in the number of my followers in comparison with those of other
842 nations". If sons and daughters behave uprightly they will act as a means
[783] of redeeming the parents' sin. Any good action by the child, e.g. giving
alms, helping the weak, digging a well, would also benefit the parents.
Parents who have left unworthy children have left "dust" behind.'

My informant went on to say: 'Children are the glory of this world, as
858 the Koran says "Money and children are the joy of this life". Another
779 statement of the Koran says: "God give us a good thing in this world and
a good thing in the next world". The Koran interpreters consider that,
in this context, "the good thing of this world" implies children. Children
are also referred to as sowing seeds, as it is through these seeds that the
corn reproduces itself.'

593 As for the wife, she attains her proper status only as a mother, and a
childless woman is in an insecure position, as her husband is socially
554 justified in remarrying, to have children. For a newly-married couple to
[595] have a child is a step towards partaking of some individuality in the larger
family circle. The wife is referred to as 'mother of the children' and when-
ever a man is asked about his wife, she is frequently referred to also as the
'mother of the first-born boy' and the same applies also to the father, and
this reference is more common in public gatherings.

My informant, Mahmoud, told me that there were ten childless women
842 in the village and that they were therefore known by everybody. Out of
these ten, two were living with husbands who had taken a second wife.
He continued, 'A childless woman is usually like a she-camel who does not
conceive, puts on more and more flesh, and gets younger every day—but
not fruitful, as she can never "lengthen" her husband's neck amongst the
menfolk. She is a sore eye to her family. The proper woman is the one who
[156] is an "envelope for conception".' It is not strange, then, that a fat woman
[826] is a desirable ideal, as she has more room to bear the child, lactates
abundantly and gives more warmth to her children.

It is appropriate here to discuss the differential value of boys and girls
858 in Silwa. The importance of the boys' work in the fields as a major con-
593 tribution to the family's means of subsistence was discussed earlier. More-
562 over, the boys are considered to be the best capital investment for ageing
parents. They are expected to form the basis for social and economic
[736] security, not only for their parents, but also for any widowed sisters. This
duty to support their parents or those female relatives who have no other
[737] man to support them is legally enforced by the religious courts. This
question gives rise to endless disputes; one hears of parents suing their
children for support according to their means, or at least threatening to
sue them. No such obligations devolve on the daughters, as they are wives
of their husbands, and no claim can be made against them.

554 Boys are also an added qualification for social prestige. A man with
562 more sons backing him up can always speak with more authority and ranks
high in the community's esteem even if he owns less land. Fathers who have

seven sons or more are always held up as a model and an enviable ideal, 554
and one of the most favourable prayers to any man is to wish him 'seven 562
sons and to perform seven pilgrimages'.

The greater status deriving from having boys shows itself in the difference [814]
of presents given to the midwife on the birth of a boy compared with [931]
those on the birth of a girl. The announcer of the birth of a boy to the
father would ask him for a present, and would warmly congratulate him, [851]
wishing him to have a brother for example for the boy if he is the first one, or to complete the seven. In the case of a girl, the father is usually teased by telling him: 'May she never sneeze.' The saying is that 'a boy is a joy even if he is stillborn'. Another saying runs, 'A boy who dies is better than
seven girls'. It is also interesting to notice that fathers and mothers swear [780]
'by the neck' of their boys, and not girls (by their lives), as one of the most effective and binding oaths. Girls jeer at their playmates who have no brothers, and swear by the life of their own brothers.

The fear of having a daughter is mainly connected with the sense of 'shame' which a girl might bring to her family, especially before her marriage. It is the responsibility of the male line of her family to arrange her [584]
marriage, and clothe and feed her if she is not married. If any disgraceful rumour about a girl or a woman spreads in the village it is the father as well as the husband who has to discipline the girl or bear the social stigma. Girls at a very early stage, on seeing a moth hovering round the fire, are taught to repeat 'Fire is preferable to shame'. It is also said that a girl is brought up only to be taken away by a man (when she is married) and this means a loss to the family.

Yet the value of the girls is often justified and rationalized by other 562
arguments. On being told of the birth of a girl, a father would say, 'She 593
is God's creation; and who knows where the blessedness lies?' A girl is always referred to in this context of the evaluation of the two sexes as 'the one who will usher her parents into the shade' (i.e. coolness) when they get old, as the girl is considered more compassionate than the boy. My informant, Mahmoud, told me that 'visiting one's daughter is usually an occasion for having either a pot of tea or some food; she can never let her father leave her husband's house without "wetting his throat".' Mothers are very keen on having daughters to help them in domestic work, by sending them on errands to neighbours' homes.

One of the folk songs refers to the daughter as 'appointing her father
as the sole arbiter in a gathering'—which is her engagement gathering [583]
when the father fixes the bride-price 'which is the daughter's weight of gold and silver'. The song goes on to say that through the daughter 'the father stretches his roots to feed other places' and thus the girl provides a means of extending kinship relations through her marriage. What the song does not explicitly say is that a girl is no financial strain on her parents as they do not provide any marriage payment for her, and hence her marriage is not a burden on the family as with the boy.

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562 It is almost a sin (makrouh) to evince any dissatisfaction on having girls.
842 One is usually reminded of the burying alive of girls in the pre-Islamic
days, and how a Moslem should not behave likewise. In this connection,
my informant, Ali, recited from the Koran. He continued to say that a
father of so many girls is generously rewarded in the next world as he is
sacrificing for them without any return. In fact, he continued, some people
who have many girls are living quite well-off. They are living 'on their
girls' wealth appropriated to them by God'.[1]

The events of pregnancy and birth occasion the exchange of many
844 social obligations amongst the womenfolk. Apart from actual help and
843 advice of relatives during pregnancy or at birth, the birth of the child
431 marks the occasion for sending gifts and making visits (zwarat). Immedi-
602 ately a woman completes her forty days of confinement, she starts with
her mother or older daughter, checking on who has sent her presents and
846 who has not, and from whom she is expecting to receive later. The failure
431 to conform to the expectations or the fulfilment of mutual 'visitings', or
602 to give the proper help at the right time would expose the people con-
cerned to great blame, fuss and gossip. 'She has not come to give me a
hand or paid me a "visiting" during the forty days or when I was
[578] "craving" ', is a plausible justification for a woman not to be on 'talking
terms' with another woman.

Amongst women folk, pregnancy and birth are occasions highly charged
602 with the rendering of social obligations and of drawing up the balance-sheet, as it were, of reciprocal obligations. Even blood relationship cannot override the emotional tension which occurs as a failure to meet the social demands. On the contrary, it accentuates it, and on such occasions one sees 'the pull and push' of kinship ties. While the fulfilment of social demands works for the cohesion and solidarity of the group, it carries with it the seeds of friction and misunderstandings.

843 It is to be noticed that the events attending pregnancy and birth, and
most of what concerns them, are almost purely within the female purview.
Men have little or nothing to do with them, not even in calling in the
midwife. It is almost a taboo for a man to mention to his fellows that his
wife is pregnant, and it is a topic avoided by men. It is very significant in
this respect that the husband whose wife is in childbirth must absent him-
844 self from the house, and, if the delivery is at night, he has to sleep outside
the house, either in a relative's house or in the guest house.

Enquiring as to whether there were any variations in the procedure of pregnancy and birth, my female informant told me that 'they happen in every family without exception or modification'. No woman in the village has been to a doctor or hospital for her delivery. She added: 'It is always better to die at home', a phrase which is usually said as a defence against going away for an uncertain project. It is also believed that one would

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[1] For a discussion on the differential value of boys and girls, see also H. Granqvist, *Child Problems among the Arabs*.

be more attached to his home if his head has first 'fallen into it' at birth 844
(masqat ar-ras).

There is no policy of any kind for limiting birth, either by spacing it 842
out or by practising birth control. Birth control in the modern sense is
unheard of, and in any case it is considered as a religious sin, and deemed
an interference with God's creation.[1] A part of the married male ethos is 831
not to regulate his sex desires, but to give them full play whenever the
need arises. Continence is not a desirable thing for a married man, but to
have sexual intercourse with his wife is a good religious deed (hasana).
One should not counteract sexual desires but rather stimulate them, and 832
hence the various devices such as special food and aphrodisiacs like
hasheesh and opium are resorted to for sexual potency. The writer heard 842
of no woman who has practised any devices to confer sterility on her.

The period of the 'forty days' is enshrouded in a great deal of secrecy
and psychological delicacy. For fear of the evil eye, the influence of the 846
evil spirits, or sterility, the mother should adhere to the rigid system of [754]
food, minimum movement and general seclusion and other taboos. This
is the period in which another woman who wants to become pregnant
might suddenly 'press' on her, and thus she could be hampered or delayed
in her next pregnancy. However, when a visitor comes to the house the
mother covers herself as well as the child and pretends to be feeling rather
uncomfortable, either groaning or suffering from pain. In referring to the
baby, visitors must be careful not to praise it openly, unless they use
the safeguarding phrases such as 'God preserve him' (or her), 'may [788]
the Prophet's blessings be upon him'. On enquiring about the sex of a
child, if it is a boy, his sex is usually hidden at first to be declared
afterwards.

Concerning the child itself, one observes that it is announced and introduced 851
in various ways. In the case of a boy, a 'gong' is produced in his
room every morning and every evening; the purpose, as it is believed, is
to make the child brave and not to fear any unexpected shock. Yet the
reaction of the neighbours on hearing the sound is one of recognition that
'the so-and-so's are sounding for their child'.

The naming ceremony in the case of a boy is the second link in the 553
chain of introducing the child to his neighbours and relatives. Actually 851
the name is usually agreed upon before birth, though the ceremony is the
formal occasion for declaring the name. Women have no formal congregation
like the men, but a small portion of food and meat is sent to the homes
of the female relatives. It is to be stressed that very few people have a [562]
naming ceremony for the girls, which is also a male gathering. The motive
behind the girls' ceremony could be regarded as a kind of religious
puritanism to counteract the pre-Islamic sin of burying the girls alive.

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[1] A scholar of al-Azhar told the writer that the Grand Mufti of Egypt recently issued [178]
a 'fatwa' permitting the use of contraceptives and sanctioning abortion before the fourth [843]
month, that is 'before the child is gifted with a soul'. [847]

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553 This celebration could also take place in the case of a married couple who
851 have had no children for a considerable length of time, and suddenly
have a girl, whom they would like to value as a boy. A man who had no
children from his first wife could also celebrate the 'sobou' of his first
child—a daughter, from his second wife. The 'sobou' ceremony for the
succeeding boys is usually held by the comparatively well-to-do people,
and one cannot fail to note the social significance of the celebrations. It is
a display of one's economic ability to be able to afford killing a ram and
[554] offering wheat bread and vegetables. Thus the continuing of 'sobou' ceremony for all the boys adds to one's social prestige.

851 The third stage of his introduction is the 'balila food' with other children after the end of the forty days. Though nothing outstanding happens during the meal, the implication is that the child, finishing his 'angelic period', would mix with these children later.

The fourth stage is the formal and informal visits of the mother and child to other people or the latter coming to her house with presents.

846 It has been mentioned that during the first forty days the child remains
in the closest contact with its mother practically throughout the whole of
its waking as well as sleeping hours as she lies beside it on the mat.
During most of this period the mother nurses the child while she is facing
[853] it. This close bodily proximity establishes the first educational relationship
for the child. Yet this is not the sole relationship, even at this period, for
850 the importance of other people for the child's education is symbolized by
the act of 'teaching' (talkeen). For this purpose 'a good man' or 'a good woman' is chosen to perform this act with the boy or the girl respectively. The chosen person eats from a sweet thing, either a date or a piece of sugar, which would then be given to the child to suck, and this is followed by prayers for the child. Through the 'talkeen' the character of the 'good man or woman' is supposed to be transmitted to the baby. When the child grows older reference to the person who 'taught' him usually crops up in assessing his character and temperament.

846 The disposal of the child's navel cord during the first forty days is of special social significance. After cutting the boy's navel cord, the father takes it to the field, there to eat some previously prepared food. After the meal, the father buries the cord in one of the divisions of the field. The income of this section is appropriated, at least theoretically, to the boy, and his 'luck' is gauged according to the yield of that area. Sometimes the boy's cord is buried below the threshold of the Kuttab (the village Koran School) as father to the wish that he would go to the Kuttab to 'memorize the Koran'. In the case of a girl, the navel cord is buried below the threshold of the house or kept in a small box. It is quite obvious that the difference in the disposal of the navel cord reflects the distinction between the prospective spheres of work for the two sexes.

854 In discussing the early training of the child during the first three years, the first important feature that looms large is the close physical proximity

not only during the first forty days but which is also sustained till the 854
arrival of the next baby. According to the family structure in the village, there are invariably at least two grown-up women attending to the rearing of the child, or sharing in the child's care, e.g. maternal grandmother, paternal grandmother, sisters, paternal or maternal aunts, or brothers' wives. As the newly born baby, or even any child, has no special cradle, cot, or bed, it always sleeps beside the mother or sits on her lap. After the forty days it may be picked up by relatives.

During the third and fourth month, the child is usually held horizontally with the mother's hands underneath its legs and head. During the fourth month it is held vertically, supported under the arms, and can be carried against the mother's breast, being supported with her hands under the buttocks. During the fifth month, he is normally held astride the mother's hip.

Nursing is one of the first basic needs of the child which in this community conforms to no schedule. It is guided only by two principles. The 853
first is that the child is given the breast whenever it cries. The second is that it is suckled when the breast becomes 'companionate', in other words when the mother's breast becomes full. It is said that when there is 'compassion' in the breast the child is hungry, and therefore the mother must offer it to her baby. The reciprocity between the baby's need and the breast is recognized to be one of the determining factors in suckling. It is true that in Silwa, as in Artas, the mother's breast is the symbol of [826]
compassion.[1] Nothing is more binding in the mother-child relationship than the memories of 'stomach enveloping' and 'breast-feeding' which are [593]
symbols invoked by mothers to remind their sons or daughters to be obedient, or to come to their help in old age. 'I enveloped you for nine months and have fed you with my breast' is supposed to be one of the most effective and compelling entreaties. In this connection, Ali related the story of the Caliph Harun al Rashid and Gafar al Barmaki, his vizier, whom the former decided to kill, and imprison or disperse the rest of his family, after he feared that they were plotting to remove him from the Caliphate. Harun carried out his decisions in spite of the entreating of Gafar's mother, who had breast-fed the Caliph and who had implored him by the milk she gave him, and the locks of his hair she had cut off and kept with her. 'This is', remarked Ali, 'an example of tyranny that overrides one's duties towards his breast-feeder who is like a mother.'

It is because women can provide their babies with milk that they are [892]
considered to be endowed with compassion. This is one of the tangible arguments for the value of having girls, who would be a source of compassion not only for their children, but also for their parents. [562]

The time and frequency of suckling varies from day to day and from child to child. A child who often cries is regarded as a weakling and hence its need for more suckling. A mother of a four-month-old child, who was

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[1] H. Granqvist, *Birth and Childhood among the Arabs*, p. 107.

853 asked to count the number of times she suckled her child over a week, reported that it varied between six and fifteen times a day. The time of each nursing varies, but it is admitted that the louder or longer the child cries the greater the time the mother expends on its suckling.

The dress of women actually helps in nursing the child without delay [291] immediately he cries. Either through the dress neck opening, which is always cut low, or the two openings, one on each breast, the mother extrudes her breast for the child. Sometimes in the presence of female strangers, or very close male relatives, the child is nursed while covered with the top garment, the breast and the child hidden between the two garments. The mother usually offers the nipple between her middle and index fingers to the child who eagerly leans towards it and grasps it. The suckling child is allowed to play freely with his mother's breast, even while alternating from one breast to another. A mother nurses her child while she is sewing, spinning, cooking or even eating. When the child grows older it can induce its mother to nurse it by rubbing its head on her breast or by inserting its hand into one of the openings.

Usually the child suckles till it is satisfied, but it also happens that the nipple is withdrawn from it whenever the mother feels that it is satisfied, or when she has to engage on an immediate task, to give it the breast later. It is worthwhile noting that the child gets the breast either when it needs it or when the breast is full, and it is withdrawn from it when it is satisfied, or when its mother feels that she has got to withdraw her breast when circumstances of her work demand it. Yet the need of the child, even theoretically, is the overriding factor in suckling. Occasions of tantalizing with the breast are reported when mothers show or play about with their breast for their children, the game invariably ending with the suckler getting the breast. It is forbidden (haram) to deprive the child of the breast once it has been tantalized. Some women in the village are known to be neglectful of their children with regard to nursing. They are reported as saying that if they attend wholly to their children, as other women do, they would not be able to attend to their home tasks. Their justification for this is implicit in their famous saying, 'Even dogs, after all, have brought forth offspring'.

The period of nursing, on the whole, varies from child to child and 862 from mother to mother, depending on the health of the child or the arrival of the next baby, or on the mother's milk. No child is ever weaned before the end of the first year. Some children are suckled for two years and a few as long as three years. The average period for most children is between a year and a year and a half. It is reported also that very few mothers nurse two children at the same time, and this custom was more common about twenty years ago, when the period of suckling was longer on the whole.

853 It is felt in the village that there is a definite relationship between 842 lactation and future pregnancy, and if a woman wishes to become pregnant

she curtails her nursing period but never before the termination of the 853
first year. In this case, the 'milking goat', whose milk is preferred to that 842
of a cow, being 'lighter', would help in feeding the child. My female informant insisted that the contrary never occurs, that a woman prolongs her nursing period to prevent pregnancy. At this point the official ideology of women differs from that in Artas as stated by Granqvist in the following quotation:

> 'As it is generally assumed that nursing makes a new pregnancy more difficult it may be thought that the women use it in self-protection, to postpone the unwished-for pregnancy. Women's work is so hard that it is almost unbelievable that they should wish to be constantly bearing children.'

The writer has enquired whether the same is being practised in Silwa, but he was assured the opposite. His informant might have wanted to hide this fact, as the logical conclusion of the relationship between conception and lactation lends itself to its use in the self-protective way mentioned by Granqvist. The informant added that it is the child's indisputable right to suck as long as it wants, otherwise it would become obstinate and disobedient, and it is only to pursue the more desired aim of fresh pregnancy that the mother is obliged to curtail the nursing period.

It is also recognized that a boy is usually nursed less than a girl, which 853
also differs from the custom in Artas. The purpose is that though both should be infused with the mother's compassion, the girl is supposed to be imbued with more of it than the boy, and consequently her nursing should be longer. Yet if a newly-married woman begets a girl in her first
birth, the custom is to curtail her nursing period in order to hurry the [840]
next pregnancy in the hope of begetting a boy. The short period of boys' nursing compared to that of girls' is also a clear indication of the accelerating process of boys' growth. The case of the boy who is brought up by a
widow and nursed for a long time is a proverbial one for 'his unreliability, [577]
his being easily swayed, and his inability to make up his mind'. Any person who evidences such character traits is designated as one who was brought up by a widow.[1]

The different claims of the patrilineal and the matrilineal sides on the 862
infant express themselves in the assumed different attitudes between father and mother with regard to weaning. While mothers consider a long period
of suckling as conducive to compassion, fathers regard it as 'darkening [828]
the infant's mind'. This difference in attitude towards weaning could be taken as a reflection of the matrilineal sentiment, contrasted with the paternal desire of subjecting the infant to social discipline as early as possible.[2]

What is also significant is the rigid observance of the nursing of the 853
child by his relatives. One of the main injunctions of the Koran is the pro- 582

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[1] It also means that he has not been disciplined by his father, as will be shown later.

[2] See Chapter II.

853 582 hibition of incestuous marriage between boys and girls who have been nursed from the same breast (foster brothers and sisters). A few incidents occur of women nursing other women's children, even when the mothers are alive, but only for special reasons, e.g. when the mother's milk is not sufficient, or when a mother has a thin underweight baby, giving hers to a fat mother with fat babies. The incidents are known, and the marriage taboo is observed. Yet such wet-nursing rarely occurs among close relatives, where future intermarriage of children is anticipated.

853 828 Significant, too, is the belief that character traits can be transmitted through the mother's milk. This is mainly emphasized by the mother's folk. Through the mother's milk the child becomes like his maternal uncles. 'If the child becomes like his maternal uncle, then he is worth praising, if he becomes like his father it is better to throw him in the sea.' The paternal side, while admitting the influence of the mother, teasingly imputes the unusual traits to her, while the strong traits are traced to the father's people. 'If the boy is not a good boy, two-thirds of his character is attributed to his maternal uncles; if he is a capable boy, then he has done no injustice to his father.'

However justifiable the claims may seem, the mother's milk is recognized as a very important factor in determining the child's character. The advice given to a man in search of a wife is to 'search for the maternal uncles of his children', as the boys would be like them through the influence of the mother's breast. With regard to this, Ali told me that the ancestor of the village (as well as other villages), G'afar, is of a higher rank of honour compared with Abdullah ibn al Zubair, the grandfather of another group of villages in the same province of Aswan. The reason is that though the two grandfathers are relatives of the Prophet of the same degree, yet the latter is not on the same level of honour because his mother and maternal uncles were slaves, while the former is of doubly honourable parentage. It is also said that 'as the roots spread and feed surreptitiously one has to choose the maternal uncles for his children'.

In this light, it is appropriate to discuss Granqvist's statement that the Arab families having Negro servants are afraid to let their children be wet-nursed by one of them, because they might acquire that 'unreasonable crossness' which they claim to characterize the Negroes. In Silwa the fear extends not only to Negroes, but to any strangers 'whose origin is not known', and who might interfere with the purity of the child's character by making it unstable, as homogeneous origin leads to a consistent and reliable character. To say that a certain person 'has origin' is to commend him, while saying he is a 'mixture' is to condemn his character. Evidence is seen in the fear of the villagers to have any mixture in either wet-nursing, or marriage, with the family of carpenters, potters and water-carriers.
582 Though the people of these families are lighter in skin than the villagers, and many of them comparatively well-to-do, they are considered as aliens and their origin is unknown. The case of the daughter of a village man

who married a member of the carpenter family is usually a source of 582 gossip and warning against such mixture.

853 In pursuing the subject of infant nursing, it is to be noted that the child does not rely entirely on mother's milk during all its nursing period, as after the fourth month it is introduced to premasticated adult food. The bits that cannot be swallowed are collected and inserted again in its mouth. Premasticated food is used more in the case of boys than girls, to help mother's milk in accelerating growth.

During nursing it is quite common to see a child sucking his fingers or pushing his fist into his mouth. He is actually encouraged in doing this by his mother, who sometimes puts her own finger into the child's mouth. 856 The need is recognized more during the teething period, that is in the fourth or fifth month. For this purpose of sucking, the mother hangs a kind of loose string round the neck of the child with a bundle of hard stuff tied in a piece of cloth, and this is supposed to assist tooth-cutting.

862 When the mother starts weaning her child, she increases the amount of premasticated food given to it. She begins by weaning her child first from one breast, and later from the other. She stops milk from the breast by rubbing the nipple with a concoction of spices, ground sheep tripe, henna, cactus juice and salt stone. After 'stopping milk' the mother turns her dress back to front so that its neck and side openings hang at the back, the child thus finding no access to the breast. For the first two days of weaning, coloured hard-boiled eggs are given to the child to play with and then to eat, whenever he wishes. In psycho-analytical language, mothers in Silwa recognize weaning as a 'traumatic experience' for the child and do their best to absorb the child's attention in other directions, especially in play with other children or providing it with some delicacies of food.

The weaning must always be arranged in such a way that it is completed in two or three days before the beginning of the lunar month. It is believed [821] to be very difficult to wean a child after the appearance of the new moon, [842] and it must be left till towards the end of it. It is also believed that a woman who weans at the beginning of the month will find it difficult to bear children. This must be also observed in connection with the circum- [304] cision of girls, so that the girl will not become sterile or find it difficult to conceive. Here, one notes the striking relation between the moon and such social phenomena as weaning and circumcision. One might be led to [821] infer that the moon must have been connected with fertility rites in some periods of Egyptian history. It is also observed by mothers that weaning of their children must not be declared immediately, but after a lapse of at least two weeks for fear of the evil eye, or 'pressure' on the mother's power to conceive.

854 The third basic need of the child, after the mother's bodily warmth and nursing, is the need for 'evacuation'. For the first four months (before the child can sit up) it is allowed to urinate and defaecate in a piece of cloth wrapped round its body from the waist to the knees, under its

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854 garment. This cloth can be removed, washed, or just dried, or changed. The child is often wiped with another cloth, but is not necessarily washed, if it soils itself. At the fourth month it is supported between its mother's feet, sitting to defaecate when the mother senses that it is uncomfortable or when it cries, and the cloth is put on only when it goes to bed. No fuss of any kind is made about urine, while more attention is given to faeces, yet revulsion is never shown by the mother. When the child starts to walk
863 it is trained to say 'kaka' when it wants to defaecate, whereupon the mother lifts its garment and asks it to go to a special corner or room in the house or to go outside. After the age of three or four most parents insist that both boys and girls defaecate outside the house, or go to the special room in the house.

514 While the boys from now on always perform their evacuation outside, the girls are confined to the house again after they reach the age of twelve. Girls always squat for urination while boys stand, but on reaching adolescence the latter squat also. In the case of boys, the tucking up of the dress or pants and the crouching posture of evacuation tend to direct attention to the exposed genitals, while in the case of girls, after the age of six or seven at most, they, in contrast, envelop the whole process with their dress, which is never tucked up. One can see boys of all ages up to eight or nine evacuating within sight, with no sense of embarrassment. When they reach puberty they seek out-of-the-way places, facing a stone or a heap.

863 It is not without justification that one can make the hypothesis that the absence of disgust towards faeces and urine with regard to the infants' early training is a cultural way of conditioning the individual to bear tolerantly the odour that attends the village sanitary conditions, swamps, and handling of animal dung either as fertilizer or as fuel.

856 Sitting and teething are considered as important events to be watched in the child's growth. By the end of the fourth month the mother begins to train her child to sit up. The saying is that a boy of four months must be able to sit up, or he should be beaten. The girl is expected to be able to sit up a little later, at the end of the fifth month. The mother makes her son sit up on the ground with his legs outstretched, supporting his back with her hands, or puts him in a large mixing or cooking pan with tall curving sides. If the boy is not taught to sit up for himself at this age, and abandon gradually the horizontal suckling position, he would be liable to have an
[827] unpleasant breath smell when he grows up.

It is also recognized that teething is accompanied by either ophthalmia or diarrhoea. The mother's milk is sometimes used as a treatment for the
[157] sore eyes at this period.

892 On the first instance of the breaking of any of the milk teeth, at the age of five or six, the tooth is put into donkey dung and thrown into the 'sun's eye', asking the sun to change the donkey's tooth for a tooth of a gazelle.

[304] Another important event in the child's life after the end of the forty

days is the piercing of the ridge of the ears 'while they are still soft'. The 853
girl would have three holes in each ear, two at the top and one in the lobe, 304
while the boy would have only two holes in the right ear, one at the top and one in the lobe. A thread is inserted into each hole so that the hole is not closed during the healing period. Immediately the punctures are healed, earrings are worn. The custom is gradually dying out in the case 301
of boys, with the exception of the first son, whereas it is still universal with all the girls. Boys are expected to discard their silver earrings by the age of eight or nine while the girls do not discard them until they are replaced before marriage by larger golden earrings.

At the end of the second year, or normally after they are weaned, both 852
boys and girls have their first haircut (for the girls it is actually the first and last). This is accompanied, in the case of a boy, by a dish of boiled maize called 'karama', to be eaten by whoever attends, usually small boys and poor people. The boy's head is left normally with three tufts of hair, [302]
one in the middle, and one on each side, the rest being shaved off by a razor. The girl is left with a large tuft on the top of the head, while the sides are shaved all round.

The care and handling of the infant are of great significance for this 854
enquiry. Whenever the child is on his mother's lap, or astride her hip, or sitting or crawling beside her, he is always fussed over. Mother or visitors try to win a smile from the baby by tickling or caressing him, by turning his face outwards and then inwards and so on, or in the case of a boy by playing with his genitals. On other occasions they talk to the baby or make noises to attract his attention. A very common way of playing with the child is to support him under his arms, throw him upwards and then catch him, and this is repeated while singing to the child or talking to him.

The time of changing clothes or bathing the baby occasions the greatest amount of bodily stimulation, where not only the mother but perhaps the other children pass their hands over the child's body, calling him 'O thou fish, thy body is as smooth as the fish'. Moreover the amount of kissing on the mouth or on the cheeks that the infant experiences far exceeds any conjectures from the European point of view. Mothers have no objection to visitors kissing their children; on the contrary, it is supposed to be one of the means of 'feeling at home' to kiss the young children, or a good gesture of friendship.

As to the other features of development, such as walking and talking, 856
the writer has found no significant differences between what he has seen in Silwa, and what he knows about the general stages of children's growth elsewhere. Here there is great variety; where some children can walk at the end of the first year, others walk a few months later; while some talk during the second year, others talk only during the third year.

The teaching of the child to walk and talk is not usually a matter for [857]
adults as much as for the older children, who usually take their siblings outside when they play. The adults do not take as active a part in teaching their children as do their older brothers or sisters.

856 their children as do their older brothers or sisters. They hardly teach or
help the child in its attempts to walk; for instance, if a child trying to walk
falls down, the mother is not supposed to show much anxiety for her
child's discomfiture; she simply has to say: 'You will grow up and have
[788] more of it', but only after spitting on the ground to ward off the effect of
the evil spirits. There is no baby talk, and when the child starts to babble,
[195] grown-ups usually tease him by examining his capacity to repeat difficult
words, but no deliberate teaching takes place.

854 As to the sleeping posture of infants, there is hardly any stylized way,
as the infant is left to sleep on his mother's lap, on another person's lap,
or on the ground, without any scheduling or worry about its sleeping hours.
Mothers are seen carrying their sleeping infants, either vertically or
horizontally, on going from one place to another. On the whole, the sleeping habits of children in Silwa are very similar to those of other peasant
societies, where they learn to sleep anywhere and through anything.[1]
513 Older children and adults can be seen asleep outside the house during
the day or the night in seemingly uncomfortable positions or places.

[1] Margaret Mead, 'The Primitive Child', in Murchison, *Handbook of Child Psychology*, Worcester, Mass., 1931, p. 677.

Chapter Five

THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS AND EVENTS OF CHILDHOOD

In this chapter the main characteristics and events of childhood
affecting both the social and psychological aspects of the individual's
personality in Silwa are to be discussed. Infancy, with which we
dealt in the last chapter, is regarded as the three or four years of the
person's life at the end of which, whatever the family and individual 858
variations may be, the infant is weaned, begins to talk and responds to
adult commands. The following years are those of childhood until the age
of twelve or thirteen, when the boy or the girl, at puberty, enters the
adolescent stage.

In our consideration of the process of 'growing up' of children, there is
hardly need to stress the fact that the process is not identical for all
children. It is beyond any question that there are certain forces and con-
ditions that bring about 'the distinctive personality constellations', e.g.
the death of a sibling older or younger, loss of a mother, a father, state of
child's health, child's birth order, age of parents at the time of child's
birth.[1] These distinctive factors with their concomitant individual differ-
ences are recognized by the villagers. A child may be referred to as a 'child 858
of old parents' (waldat 'ajayiz) and is usually characterised by being pre- 828
cocious in his development, or a 'child brought forth in the years of
plenty or in the lean years', the former possessing easy and happy disposi-
tion, while the latter is expected to be nagging and irritable. In the next
two chapters, however, the common prevailing forces that leave their
impact on the personality development of the village children are
discussed.

One of the main characteristics of this period of childhood is the pressure 865
of sibling rivalry which is socially recognised, being evidenced in certain 593
symbolic forms of wear, folk-lore, and symptoms of sickness. Sibling
rivalry, however, is not peculiar to the child's growing up in Silwa, but,
as demonstrated by Levy's projective doll-playing tests, 'represents a

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[1] Clyde Kluckhohn, 'Personality Formation among the Navaho Indians', in *Sociometry*, Vol. IX, 1946, pp. 130 ff.

865 593 universal experience when a mother has more than one child in her own care'.[1] The peculiar side of it in this community is the way it is acknowledged and its use as an incentive in child development. In this treatment of the manifestations of sibling rivalry and the important part it plays in the formation of personality, no test of the Levy type was administered, but the cultural symbols and condensations were taken to offer ready-made data comparable to Levy's projective test.[2]

It is assumed in Silwa that the knee-baby is always jealous of the lap-baby, and the yard-baby is jealous of the knee-baby, and that this jealousy is irrespective of sex.[3] The absolute order of birth is maintained as the source of sibling rivalry and in the case of the death of the knee-baby, for example, the yard-baby will not be jealous of the lap-baby. The process is thus juxtapositional, each child always rivalling the immediately younger one who is 'above him' and who is also described as the one 'who pushes him away'. [152] Jealousy is also believed to be one-way, as expressed in the apprehensiveness of the older towards the younger, and not the converse, and therefore it is always the older who is jealous of the younger.

It is considered, according to one of my female informants, that sibling rivalry is essential in the process of a child's growth, particularly for the [853] boys. In the case of the first child, the mother usually induces him to suckle by offering her breast to a strange child. My informant went on to tell me of the folk story of the mother who had only one child and did 865 not bear any more. At the age of seven, however, her son displayed the physical and social maturity of a child of four, being a weakling who knew nothing about the world. This retarded growth worried his mother who consulted various people as to the best way of treating him. At last, she was advised by an old woman to send him to another household, which had many children in it, in another village and to keep him there for a year. During the first few weeks the boy used to sit with the other children round a dish of food, without getting sufficient to eat. Thus he was almost starved, his condition deteriorating. After that period, however, his rivalry with the other children was stimulated and he began to compete with them in eating, playing and running errands. Through this method his development accelerated, and as he became lively his mother took him back home.

It is believed that the arrival of a newborn baby helps to free the next [860] oldest baby from his mother and thus assist its weaning, otherwise it would 'stick to its mother's neck'. As the terminal baby, or, as it is sometimes

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[1] See William Henry, 'The Thematic Apperception Technique in the Study of Culture-Personality Relations', in *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, Vol. XXXV. See also Susan Isaacs, *Social Development in Young Children*, London, 1937.

[2] Benjamin D. Paul, 'Symbolic Sibling Rivalry in a Guatemalan Indian Village', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. LII, 1950, p. 205.

[3] These stages of child development are adopted by Margaret Mead, 'Age Patterning in Personality Development', in *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Vol. XVII, 1947, pp. 230–40.

As the terminal baby, or, as it is sometimes called, the 'last of the bunch', has no rival, it is usually suckled longer and 865 is considered to be more demanding, thus requiring more protection and 858 pampering since its natural growth is not assisted by the stimulus of rivalry. It is true that the last-born child in a family is regarded as spoilt, and in normal social life this fact could be used by others to account for its shortcomings.

It is also acknowledged that the youngest child becomes jealous immediately 865 his mother's abdomen becomes enlarged on pregnancy and he 593 is usually told of the forthcoming event. The mother hums phrases expressing 152 her sympathy with the child's jealousy and anxiety in store for him. The custom, though not so common now as it was twenty years ago, is for the older child after the birth of a new baby to wear round its neck one, [151] two, or three cubes of sulphur called cubes of jealousy, wrapped in a piece of leather. This is supposed to minimize the dangers of excessive jealousy, as although jealousy is a healthy drive for growth, its excess might have ill effects on the child. It could induce diarrhoea, swellings, lack of appetite, temper tantrums, and sleeplessness.[1]

Such symptoms of illness caused by jealousy are diagnosed, and a traditional 865 cure is administered by the mother, grandmother or an experienced 593 old woman. The cure is called 'kurfa', which literally means something that dispels aggressiveness and sulkiness. The 'kurfa' consists of an egg 152 fried in oil with garlic and spices which is given to the child to eat, usually 255 when his suckling sibling is asleep. Now the jealous child is in complete possession of his mother's attention; she feeds him on the 'kurfa', while he sits on her lap. He is told of how 'awful' his sibling is, and how 'nice and grown-up' he himself looks. After finishing his egg, the child's body is rubbed with the same cooking oil to ease the tensions of envy in his body. These titbits of food represent the few instances in which the knee-baby is allowed to recapture fully his mother's love and to dethrone his younger sibling. It is a symbolic acceptance of a break in the normal behaviour of the knee-baby, rewarded by regressive gratification. This 'kurfa' meal is [154] a propitiatory means of enabling the older child to withstand the strains of sibling rivalry, and to accept the newborn baby with whom he has to identify himself later, either by looking after it or by taking it out to play. Such propitiation becomes more significant in the process of growing up when it is realized that the child is not allowed to manifest his anxiety over, or his deprivation from, his mother on pain of punishment. Such states of temper, tantrums or sulkiness are sometimes dealt with by the mother pretending to strike the younger baby who is the cause of the child's troubles. The great deal of roughness and aggression displayed in [154] children's play outside the home could be considered as a cultural outlet for some of their repressed hostility towards their siblings and parents.

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[1] 'Swelling and outbursting' are used figuratively in the villagers' language to denote [195] jealousy. Especially in women's altercations, one hears the phrase, 'You have a swelling from me', meaning 'you are jealous'.

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865 593 Moreover, it was significant that when my informant declared that the rivalry was an essential incentive in the process of growing up, she added that it would enable the child to stand up to its rivals on becoming an adult. The use of sibling rivalry could also be related to the brothers' avoidance of each other, especially in formal gatherings, and also to the cultural expectation of brothers' friction and wranglings which are quite frequent amongst adultr in the village.[1]

Certain families in the village try to provoke sibling rivalry, if it is not manifested strongly between children, by giving the older sibling a nickname, 'A ram which drinks from the water, left after baking'—meaning that he is good for nothing, while calling the younger sibling a camel—being a useful animal, and thus motivating the former to conform to what is expected from a boy of his age. In one of the families, Hassan, who is four years old, and Taha, who is two years old, are two brothers; one called 'Hassan al-dalihi'—the stupid one, while Taha is labelled 'al-nasih'—the clever. This nicknaming was due, according to their mother, to the fact that Hassan was seldom as alert as other boys of his age, and this nickname was supposed to shake him up. The writer noticed that Hassan was always asked to do things with reference to his younger brother. His mother would say: 'Eat this before Taha takes it', and this was accompanied by a movement towards Taha as if she was going to give him the food. Sometimes she would say: 'Take it, or I will give it to Taha', even if the latter were not present. In another house, the mother asked Fatima, the naughty girl, who was reluctant to comb her hair, to come to her before Sakina, the good girl, did so. Fatima was still disobedient, and so the mother started combing Sakina's hair, and immediately Fatima dashed towards her mother and lowered her head for combing. The normal procedure in giving nick- [551] names is to call the younger child with a self-deprecating word, to appease the older one, which is compatible with the hierarchical structure of the family. Reversing this order, by giving a good name to the younger, is only resorted to for the purpose of fostering the desired amount of sibling rivalry indispensable in the villagers' views for healthy development. To experience rivalry with a sibling or cousin is regarded as making the child grow to be a 'hot' man, in contrast to one who is 'blunt'—who is not easily moved or provoked. It is also noticed that a visitor, on meeting a child of the house, usually asks him the hackneyed question: 'Who is better, you or your brother?' One is justified in considering the emphasis on sibling [867] rivalry as a cultural means of motivating the child to abandon his babyish attitudes and behave according to his age.

It is worth mentioning that the motivation of rivalry connected with the presence, actual or potential, of another person, is one of the strong incen- [626] tives for appropriate behaviour, which combines social conformity with a high-pressure ego development.

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[1] M. Fortes remarks that among the Tallensi, open recognition of sibling rivalry prevents it from turning into a disruptive element in the relations of siblings. *The Web of Kinship*, footnote, p. 235.

high-pressure ego development. The sense of importance and worthiness 865 is continually hammered into the children's minds through comparing 593 them with either their sibling or other children.[1] It is no exaggeration to say that competitiveness in Silwa receives its first stimulus from sibling [856] relationships, and is expressed in the popular saying that 'children who come on top of one another cannot get along with each other'. Siblings of 857 different ages are expected to play in different age groupe, especially after 561 the age of six or seven. Although there is no institutionalized favouritism for the first son with regard to inheritance, for example, he is usually the 858 most welcome member of the family as in his later life he will be his father's representative. It is no accident, then, that the first-born son receives more attention, as is usually expressed in his ceremonies of naming, circumcision, and wedding.

Together with this sibling relationship envisaged in a series of children chasing each other, one can hardly fail to note the difference of treatment between boys and girls in general. These disparities between the treatment of the two sexes are not mainly based on the superiority of the male sex or the female, but are largely founded on the relevance of the two sexes to the perpetuation of the family name and their respective economic activities.[2] The popular saying goes to the effect that the daughter's son should not receive much attention from his grandfather as such attention is wasted. However, it does not unduly worry parents in any way if their [865] daughters do not show behaviour indications of rivalry during childhood. It will become clearer, as we proceed, that girls only enjoy relative indulgence during infancy, especially with regard to their comparatively longer period of suckling. But from childhood onwards they are expected to approach sociological adulthood more quickly than the boys.[3]

The second characteristic of the period of childhood is connected with 855 the decreasing amount of care and attention given to the child by its mother. This is evidenced by the children's appearance during this stage of development. They are less clean in body and clothes, and it is not an unusual sight to find nasal mucus on children's faces. Mothers justify this neglect on the grounds that the child at this stage, where he is usually out [754] with other children and thus exposed to the public, should not appear attractive for fear of the evil eye. This lack of interest in children's appearance usually continues until the age of nine, ten or eleven. Thereafter an unkempt or shabby child would be a disgrace to his parents. The renewed interest, especially in the child's clothes, after the age of ten, is [291] related also to the need for covering the organs of reproduction by wearing [842]

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[1] For concrete statements of children concerning sibling rivalry, see Appendix VIII, 'Stewart Emotional Response Test', and Appendix X, 'Story Completion Test'.

[2] See Chapter I.

[3] It is assumed here that rivalry is socially inherited and is passed on from parents to their children. 'A mother through her attitude continues the old battle, and in the competitive struggles of her children she relives the competitive struggles of her childhood.' [865] R. H. Hilgard, 'Sibling Rivalry and Social Heredity', in *Psychiatry*, Vol. 14, 1951.

291 suitable clothes. Grown-up boys and girls who wear torn clothes which might expose their pudenda, are open to shame and gossip amongst other
289 children.

With regard to clothes, it is noticed that children, up to the age of nine
291 or ten, usually wear a one-piece garment called a gallabiah, with a head-cap (takia) for boys, and a coloured head-cloth for girls (mudawaria). Children do not dress like their fathers or mothers, who wear two-piece garments at least, always with a black over-garment, especially when they go out of the house for a gathering or a visit. Yet after about the age of ten, both boys and girls tend to approximate their parents in their dress, with the exception of the black over-garment. Boys, for example, wear pants under their gallabiahs, while the girls wear two gallabiahs when they are outside the house.

165 The fact that the children after weaning receive a decreasing amount of care and attention is a contributory factor to the high death-rate of
[855] children. In Silwa, as judged from the health centre records during the last three years, the highest mortality figure is for the children between two and five years old. For the country as a whole, the birth-rate ranks among
[163] the highest in the world.[1] For the years between 1939 and 1943 the birth-rate per thousand in the population was 42·2, 41·6, 40·8, 38·2, 39·6 respectively. The following table shows the death-rate according to different age groups with those of less than five years giving the highest percentages.[2]

TABLE II

Death-rate according to different age-groups

Age	1942 %	1943 %	1944 %	1945 %	1946 %
less than one year	22·22	20·33	23·40	23·50	23·20
from 1–4 years	28·20	25·0	26·81	25·30	25·80
" 5–9 "	3·90	3·84	3·92	6·04	3·34
" 10–19 "	3·66	3·84	4·06	4·22	4·43
" 20–29 "	3·94	4·23	3·98	4·06	4·25
" 30–39 "	5·05	5·51	5·09	5·02	5·37
" 40–49 "	4·84	5·38	4·93	4·79	5·18
" 50–59 "	4·50	5·06	4·68	4·55	4·86
" 60–69 "	4·87	5·48	5·05	4·85	5·26
" 70–79 "	5·11	5·64	5·17	5·00	5·45
" 80–89 "	5·34	5·49	5·15	4·99	5·89
" 90 and over	7·90	7·87	7·18	7·10	7·06
unidentified ages	0·32	0·299	0·64	0·323	0·405

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[1] *Statistical Year Book of the League of Nations*, 1942–4.

[2] *Pocket Census of 1948*, p. 92, from which these percentages are worked out.

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There is another aspect of the high mortality rate of children, which is not confined to the Silwa community, but applies to the rest of the country. Infant mortality has an obvious effect on the stability of marriage relationship, as a woman that bears children who do not survive is in danger of being divorced by her husband, for she is considered the same as one who cannot bear children at all. The larger the number of children surviving, the less likelihood there is of divorce.[1] Hence, the dire need to prevent such a disaster by women who resort to many devices for pregnancy or warding off the evil eye, some of which were described earlier. Official statistics clearly show the relation between divorce and the number of children born or surviving; the latter case is shown in the following table. 58

TABLE III

The relation between divorce and the number of surviving children in percentages[2]

No. of Children	*Divorces*				
	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946
None	74·7	76·0	77·0	76·8	77·8
One child	16·3	15·78	15·3	15·3	15·0
Two children	5·08	4·78	4·52	4·54	4·2
Three "	2·18	2·10	1·95	1·90	1·77
Four "	0·985	0·907	0·754	0·712	0·778
Five "	0·398	0·395	0·316	0·348	0·332
More than five children	0·318	0·222	0·245	0·186	0·205

This high mortality rate for this age group is partly due to the onset of various child diseases such as measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, diphtheria, as well as endemic diseases such as dysentery. As mentioned earlier, the sickness of children at this stage is acknowledged by the villagers themselves and sometimes attributed to acute states of jealousy from siblings, or to the exposure of the delicate child to the evil eye.[3] 164

On the whole, the family treatment of the infant is relatively more protective and more attentive compared with the later period of childhood. Nursing children usually fare better than their older siblings in health and appearance. The protective attitude towards nurslings and toddlers could 855 854

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[1] M. [illegible], 'Infant Mortality in Egypt', Ph.D. Thesis (unpublished), London, [illegible], p. [illegible].

[2] Worked out from the *Pocket Census of 1946*, p. 31.

[3] According to *Vital Statistics* in Egypt, diseases responsible for infant mortality according to their death poll are infectious diseases, respiratory system diseases, diarrhoea and congenital diseases.

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855 be explained as a result of the cultural pressure for a large family, the
854 achievement of which is threatened by the high death rate among children. Parents feel that they have done their duty towards the child's care immediately he is able to walk and talk, and the rest of his development is left to God's protection. Moreover, the relatively low mortality rate amongst sucklings in Silwa is due to the fact that they depend mainly upon their mother's milk, while after weaning, adult food is given to the
[146] children which cannot be an adequate substitute for the mother's milk because of its unsuitability and deficiency. Yet it must be noted here that
145 children in the province of Aswan are very much undernourished compared with the normal healthy development of other more fortunate children. They are ten centimetres (about 4 inches) less in height, and five kilograms (about 12 pounds) less in weight, and the percentage of haemoglobin in their blood is only 40 per cent.[1]

857 A third important characteristic of this period of childhood is the integration of the boy or the girl with the play group and age mates. About the age of three, the child's attachment to his mother is expected to be over,
[866] and this means gradually increasing its contacts with its age group outside the household, and thus the child directs itself, first to its elder siblings and relatives, and then gradually to other children in its play activities. The child may be led by hand or straddled on the shoulder by an older sister to watch other children playing, or taken to defaecate where other child-
857 ren do the same thing. The authority of the older sibling plays a dominant part in shaping the child's attitudes from now onwards. The older sisters
593 or brothers act as guardians for their younger siblings; they soothe them when they cry, protect them from interference from other boys or girls. While older boys are playing, one might hear one of them saying: 'Your brother is crying, and I'll have nothing to do with him, you are his brother and you should quieten him.' It is accepted that if the older brothers and sisters are about, other boys and girls hardly ever interfere with the younger siblings for fear of being blamed for their crying or injury. It must be pointed out here that boys are usually less burdened with the care of their younger brothers compared with girls, and this is probably one of the reasons that gives the boys freer scope for movement and rough play.

The younger boys and girls form the fringe of their older siblings' play-groups, but gradually they start to form their own groups, and imitate their elders. One finds that younger boys of five or six might be playing with their older brothers in one game, but one hardly finds boys of eight or nine in the same play group as their older brothers of the age of twelve, thirteen or fourteen. On the whole, siblings after the age of seven or eight usually prefer to go to different places for their games, and till that age, the basis of play is blood relationship and neighbourhood. A stranger boy who wants to join other children in their play is either introduced to the play group as a relative, or warned against joining them on the grounds of their being strangers. 857 573

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[1] Ministry of Health Statistics quoted by M. Khattab, in a speech in the Upper House of Parliament, in *Al-Ahram* (Egyptian daily paper), 26 December 1940.

Furthermore an age group can only extend itself, though not freely or without reserve, to the age group directly senior to it.[1] In other words, 561 boys, for example, may be seen playing or sitting with adolescents or young unmarried men, but are not expected to mix with grown-up men. Adolescents and young men may also be seen sitting on the fringe of an adult gathering, though very infrequently. At night a man may be chatting with a group of older boys, but always sitting on the fringe of their gathering, as an indication of his aloofness. Such behaviour related to the three age groups in the village is expressed in the admonition that one 'should not exceed the limits in his behaviour'. For example, a boy who passes by 561 a gathering of adults sprawling on the ground is not supposed to greet them, much less pass between them. Rikabi, a boy of twelve years, 858 approached a meeting of neighbours near his home, and greeted them by saying 'Peace be upon you'. This action annoyed his father as well as the others, and provoked the father to reply: 'Go away, may peace crush you.' In this case, the boy was trying to act like a grown-up, but such precociousness is not the accepted behaviour from a boy of his age. Had he been seventeen or eighteen years his greetings would have been accepted and considered praiseworthy.

Terms of courtesy are not expected among the children themselves and 576 avoidance is the best way of showing courtesy between adults and children. With the impact of urban life, polite children are expected to say 'Thank [369] you' or 'May God increase your blessings' to their elders, while the latter seldom show their appreciation of the children's assistance for them, which if ever expressed would be couched in kinship terms such as 'May God increase thy blessings; thou art the master of thy uncle'.

The fourth characteristic of this period of childhood is the striking 862 interest and respect of children for food. It is quite frequent to see boys and girls inside or outside the house holding in their hands a piece of bread or an onion and eating it while they play. They may be also seen tantalizing each other by the type of bread they have, priding themselves on their mother's good baking. Children, on the whole, tend to be preoccupied and interested in food. This shows itself in the children's ordinary conversation, in the amount of details they give in relating a folk story with food themes occurring in it, in their excessive delight in telling about a good meal that they had or that they are going to have. Feasts and ceremonies are first recalled as occasions for excessive good food. Even in both adults' and children's dreams, food is an important element in their manifest content.[2] Children prefer certain relatives to others because they offer them food and tea; they share food with those children whom they like and refuse to share it with those whom they dislike.

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[1] See Chapter II for the three age groups in the village.

[2] See Appendix XI, 'A Note on Dreams', and Appendices VIII and X.

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862 264 It was mentioned earlier that food is considered almost sacred and it was shown how this attitude towards it was instilled into the children. They call bread 'baraka' and swear by it.[1] Moreover, it is worth noting that while the children talk of, and display food freely, still have no shame about eating anywhere, adults are quite secretive and scrupulous about their food. The latter are wary of being exposed to the eye of a stranger while they are eating; they feel that if they do not ask the stranger to join them in the meal, he might have a bad effect on what they are eating. It is the custom to insist on any unexpected person joining them in eating even for one bite by saying, 'Come and say "In the Name of God".' The invited person in this case usually expresses his willingness to have a bite with the others to still any fear or suspicion, or says that he has just eaten, 'Thanks to God'. Food carried from the house to the guest house is usually covered, not necessarily for hygienic purposes, but for the fear of being 'breathed in' by onlookers. This secretive attitude towards food is usually inculcated into the children when they are old enough to be able to know when to stop eating or postpone it, if a visitor suddenly comes to the house. It is not surprising to find food as one of the major interests in children's lives in a community which divides the year into the seasons of richness and plenty, referring to the times immediately after the harvest, while those times preceding it are called seasons of hunger. [805]

852 304 The greatest experience that the child undergoes during childhood is circumcision. The boy is usually circumcised between the ages of three and six, and his circumcision is accompanied by a ceremony which is justified on religious grounds. The adult public celebration of the occasion consists of communal feasting of all the male relatives and friends invited on the evening previous to the evening of the rite, while the female relatives partake of a meal in the house. In the case of a girl's circumcision, the celebration is confined purely to women, and no man, not even the father, is expected to participate, or to show an interest in it.

Before the actual celebrations of the ceremony, the boy who is to be circumcised is taken round the village with a group of his age-mates and older boys, inviting relatives and friends in their houses to join the celebration of the occasion. Sometimes the invitation is oral, and sometimes by handing over a written invitation.

[264] The day of circumcision arrives, and as expected during the evening communal meal, boys would be eating from separate trays apart from the adults, while some of them would be serving the rest of the guests by fetching more bread, or more vegetables, and washing hands before and after the meal, while an adult would be chosen to distribute the meat from a common dish. The meal would end with the reading of 'Fatiha' to render the event successful, and expressed hope that the guests might one day attend the child's marriage ceremony, and blessings invoked for the parents and the family. The meal would be followed by reciting parts from the

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[1] See Chapter I.

Koran, and readings of the Prophet's birthday story. During all this, the 856
children would either be sitting behind the adults or clustered in one of 304
the corners of the house ready to execute their elders' commands.

Later on, the actual circumcising of the boy takes place. The child is now the centre of attention. He sits on the ground with a colourful girl's headcloth round his neck, while the village barber shaves his head, a task [300] which should occupy him for three or four hours before performing the operation. Meanwhile, as the women are rejoicing by singing and playing [534] on the tambourine inside the house, the father's invited relatives and friends would be bringing along their contributions (nakout) of money [431] or of corn. Every time the father receives a contribution, he tells an announcer, who is a specialist for this job, that so-and-so has delivered his contribution. The announcer in a chanting voice declares that so-and-so, adding his relationship to the child if he is a close relative, or just adding paternal uncle or maternal uncle, has presented the 'bridegroom' with silver and gold, and entreats God to compensate him with all the good things in the world. The name of one contributor might be announced more than once, and this depends on the amount of contribution, and the closeness of relationship to the child. After each contribution, the village barber shaves, or at least pretends to shave, a little more of the boy's hair. When the father sees that all those whom he has invited or expected to contribute have arrived, the announcer retires, by which time the barber has finished shaving the boy.[1] Then the actual circumcision takes place by seating the child on a large vessel. The instruments for the operation [744] are nowadays given to the barber by the Ministry of Health as well as instructions and ointment for the post-operative treatment.

Just before the operation begins, the child casts off the girl's headcloth and puts on a new garment consisting of an open white shift covered by [292] another open green garment, similar to the type of dress which a religious person is expected to wear on certain occasions. During the operation, the boy is encouraged not to cry or show any signs of pain, otherwise he [152] would be accused of girlishness. He is held back, and forcibly prevented from looking at his penis, otherwise it is believed he would become [842] impotent.

This is immediately followed by a procession of men and boys followed by women and girls to visit the mosque, after which a group of female relatives and friends of the mother, together with the children, take the child to gaze on the Nile water. During all this, sweets, dates, and pea- [262] nuts would be distributed. For a whole week the child, wearing charms round his neck, is not encouraged to walk, and is fed not so much on bread or meat, but mainly on boiled eggs, dried peas, salted peanuts and rice.

After a week or ten days, the circumcised boy is taken with other boys 852 on a round asking for the 'custom' (al-'ada) from relatives and neighbours, and friends in the village. On this occasion all the boys carry palm-tree

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[1] If the boy is too young for a head shave, his older brother or cousin may take his place.

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branches in their hands, and in front of every house they stand chanting at the top of their voices, while swaying their branches. They call out together, 'Give us the custom, either a pigeon, a fat hen, a cock, or an egg'. At the end of the round the group of boys return home with what they may have collected to partake of a meal well-prepared by the mother of the circumcised boy. This round is actually considered to be the female contributions to the circumcised boy and his family. In this way the boy [860] and his age group not only witness the web of social reciprocity, but they are actively introduced to it.

852 The purpose of circumcising girls, according to the village midwife, is to prevent any suspicion on the bridegroom's part that the bride is not a 364 virgin. The midwife, with her surgical instruments provided by the [744] Ministry of Health, seats the girl on a chair, or vessel, while three women assist her by holding the girl's legs apart as well as supporting her back, a posture very similar to that assumed at childbirth. Girls are usually circumcised at a later age than the boys, when they are about seven or eight.

After the operation the legs are tied together at the thighs and ankles to prevent violent movement and thus render the operation successful. The ties are usually undone after a week or ten days, during which time the girl is fed in a similar way to the boy.

852 Anthropologists consider circumcision ceremonies as *rites de passage*; they are undoubtedly of great significance to the family, as well as to the child, 431 especially if he is old enough. It is an intra-familial activity, and an occasion for the exchange of mutual obligations. The father receives his due contributions from relatives and friends to whom he has rendered such an obligation previously. Fathers keep a book, where they register those who have brought their contributions, and the amount which they have given. Traditionally, the fact that someone contributes to your ceremony counts rather than the amount of his contributions, that is, the relevant and compelling force is the carrying-out of mutual obligations on an occasion of circumcision. To illustrate this, a father who has one son should contribute to all those who have sent their contributions on the occasion of circumcising, not only their first sons, but all their sons. It is obvious here that the qualitative rather than the quantitative aspect of the social obligation is the more important. For the last ten years, however, there has been an [178] increasing trend towards contributing on the same number of occasions as one has received a contribution from a particular person. Discussion and wrangling occasionally arise as to the appropriate way of 'give and take' on such occasions. Some people have struck a compromise so that the contributions are equalized between the same number of children, whereas the contributions towards the extra number of children are less in value and are made with a view to keeping the social relationships intact.

431 In ceremonies of circumcision, wedding, and preparation for pilgrimage, contributions (nakout) play a considerable part, especially in the case of

the first two ceremonies, in covering the expenses incurred during the 431
celebrations. It is known by the villagers that on such occasions one usually gains financially, as the person who is celebrating is paid back on one evening all that he had invested previously at different times, and thus it is a time for getting back one's savings.[1] Such reciprocal aid in these ceremonies does not make such enterprises a burdensome task in Silwa and in many other villages in the province of Aswan. This is different from the conditions obtaining in the province of Sharqiya. In 1940 Dr. Abbas Ammar reported that 11·8 of the indebtedness of the people of Sharqiya was due to expenses incurred on wedding celebrations.[2]

One often reads outright condemnation of such ceremonial celebrations 426
which make many a fellah fall into debt. It must be remembered that the 554
desire for the prestige connected with a sense of plenty as expressed in feasts and ceremonies is a natural human tendency. In this connection 000
Freud says: 'A festival is a permitted, or rather an obligatory, excess, a solemn breach of a prohibition. . . . It is not that men commit the excess because they are feeling happy as a result of an injunction they have received. It is rather that excess is of the essence of a festival; the festive feeling is produced by the liberty to do what is as a rule prohibited.'[3]

It is not so important here whether one accepts Freud's argument or 571
not; what is more vital is to realize that such ceremonial occasions provide the fellaheen with a healthy scope for the expressive elements in human 156
behaviour and life in general, without which existence would become monotonous. To view such celebrations only as one of the main causes of the fellah's indebtedness, as some social reformers in Egypt do, ignores the social framework of valuations. Such ceremonies of circumcision, weddings, funerals, are occasions where the community gives reality to some of its social ideals and practices. They also act as a social mode of catharsis for the family and the individual concerned through which they acquire and satisfy what social psychologists call the 'sense of belonging' and the demands of group loyalty and morality.[4]

There is no doubt that the circumcision ceremony is a formal occasion 852
for introducing the child into the wider circle of family relatives and to 867
the whole village. This occasion is taken to express bonds of blood, affinal or friendly relationships between the family of the circumcised boy and other families. It is interesting to note that the boy's mother is the first and only female contributor in the announcement ceremony, and her contribution of corn, dates and sugar goes to the announcer. [431] Other close relatives such as an uncle, or grandfather, have also to contribute on this

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[1] This reminds the writer of one of Malinowski's findings showing that the ceremonial treatment of certain aspects of life, e.g. sex, crises of human existence, are more than the assertion of their social significance but also have a pragmatic value.

[2] Abbas M. Ammar, 'The People of Sharqiya', Ph.D. Thesis (Manchester University), 1940, pp. 428, 429.

[3] S. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, London, 1950.

[4] See S. F. Nadel, *Foundations of Social Anthropology*, pp. 343-4.

852 occasion, even if they live with the father in the same household. Dispute
867 between brothers or sisters is usually an irrelevant factor in the exchange
of mutual contributions which are morally compulsory on such occasions.
[593] The ideal of the family solidarity must be expressed, at least formally at
public ceremonies. The sociological significance of the ceremony cannot
be exaggerated, as it must take place even in the case of children whose
[826] foreskin is congenitally contracted or damaged by disease. Although such
children are believed to be circumcised by the angels, the ceremony is
[796] still held, even without any operation on the child.

Traditionally, one of the main justifications for holding the ceremony is
852 the religious significance attached to it throughout the whole Moslem
779 world. To be a Moslem, it is believed, is to be circumcised as distinguished
from the non-Moslems, who for the most part are not circumcised. How-
ever, there is no text in the Koran that enjoins circumcision upon the
Moslem, and it is only mentioned in the prophetic tradition. It is main-
tained that circumcision was the practice not only of the Prophet Moham-
med, but all previous prophets, such as Abraham, Noah, Hud, Saleh,
Joseph, Moses, and Solomon. In the prophetic sayings there is no fixed
time for the performance of circumcision, as amongst the Jews; it is,
however, preferable to have it done before the boy attains maturity. It is
reported that the Prophet said, 'Abraham, the friend of the Merciful, was
the first man who entertained guests, the first man who underwent circum-
cision, the first man who shortened his moustache, and the first man who
saw grey hairs. He asked, on seeing the grey hairs: "O Lord, what is this?"
The Almighty and Glorious Lord said: "Dignity, O Abraham." He said:
"O Lord, increase dignity in me."' Another prophetic tradition says,
'Circumcision is my way for men, but is merely ennobling for women'.
It is also reported that the Prophet told a woman who was just converted
into Islam and was thinking of being circumcised, 'Don't ihflict trouble
on yourself, because that is painful to a wife, but pleasing to a husband'.[1]

852 The chain of authorities for most of the Prophet's dicta about circum-
cision is more often than not weak, and one is justified in regarding them
[779] as open to question. The four Schools of Moslem Law differ as to the
obligatory nature of circumcision.[2] The practice, however, was wide-
spread, though not universal, in pagan Arabia, and to be uncircumcised
—'aghral' or 'aghlaf'—was thought disgraceful. Modern educated Mos-
lems might justify circumcision on hygienic grounds, but the writer did
[783] not get any such explicit or implicit explanation from the villagers. For
the latter, it literally means religious purification, which makes the person

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[1] *Mishkat-al-Masabih*, English translation by al-Hag Maulana-Fazlul Karim, Vol. I, pp. 737–8.

[2] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Article, 'Circumcision (Muhammadan)', by D. S. Margoliouth. In the same source under 'Circumcision (Ancient Egypt)', it is mentioned that this ritual was practised in Ancient Egypt, although there is no decisive evidence with regard to either its generality or the nature of its practice.

fit for prayers. It is not uncommon, whether amongst children or adults, to describe a person as disgraceful by saying that he has still got the foreskin. 852 783 The relation between circumcision and ceremonial purity is also confirmed by the fact that those boys whose prepuce is absent are considered to be purified by the angels. The circumcised boy's dress, that of a religious man in open white shift and a green outer garment, could be also taken as evidence for the purificatory significance of the ritual.

852 [779] It must be pointed out here that the circumcision of girls has never had the universality of that of the boys; the religious authority behind it is very weak and could be rejected, and even its practice is not universal throughout the Moslem world at present. On the other hand, some of the prophetic traditions, as mentioned earlier, do not specify its desirability for the female, and the absence of such a definite religious backing for it should render its abandonment comparatively easy. It is argued that circumcision of girls, by removing the clitoris, which is regarded as the centre of excitement, is deemed necessary for ensuring pre-marital chastity.[1] [834] [832] Such a statement was mentioned to the writer by the midwife in Silwa before he became aware of it in anthropological literature. The need for the control of any sexual excitability is understandable in a religiously puritanic community which considers any form of emotional stimulus, either through glance or touch, from any member of the opposite sex, other than the husband or wife, as sinful.

851 852 867 The circumcision ceremony could be considered as a public declaration of the child's sex, with the father as socially responsible for the ceremony in the case of his son, while the mother and her female relatives solely attend to it in the case of the daughter. In other words it provides a social emphasis on the child's alignment with its sex group. The distinction between male and female circumcision is reflected in Classical Arabic by the use of two different words—'khatan' for the boy, and 'khafd' for the girl. In the colloquial language of the village, circumcision of the boy is sometimes referred to as 'cutting his pigeon' while in the case of a girl it is described as 'cutting her cockscomb'. The operation is not suddenly performed on the child, but the mother, especially in the case of her son, may attempt to prepare him gradually for the event by caressing his organ and playfully endeavouring to separate the foreskin from the glans. While doing this, she would hum words to the effect that what she is doing will help to make him to become a man amongst men. In a community with rigid sex dichotomy, it is not surprising to find that it is a great fright, or a source of great resentment, for a small boy to be threatened by his mother [861] that she will circumcise him, and for the girl to be threatened to be circumcised by the father. Such a threat by a parent of the opposite sex to the child is considered by the parents as one of the most dire threats that can be uttered, and it is thus used to help the child in identifying himself with the parent of his own sex.

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[1] *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Article on 'Circumcision', p. 666.

THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS AND EVENTS OF CHILDHOOD

851 859 867 The alignment of the child with its sex could be also inferred from the fact that during the ceremony the boy wears a girl's headcloth, symbolising his last chance of indulging in any activity which is not deemed fit for males.[1] This influence has been brought to the writer's mind by the barber's comment; while wrapping the headcloth round the boy's neck, he says: 'Let us put this female cloth around you, and by making you look like a girl tonight, you will be able to avert the evil eye.' This is also obvious in the expected behaviour of the boys not to cry or show any signs [152] of pain during the operation, in order to whiten the father's face, while the girls in contrast are expected and allowed to cry. That the difference in the expectation is due to the fact that the girl's operation is more painful than that of the boy, and hence justifiable, is one way of looking at it, but it is undoubtedly a reflection of the expected ethos of the two [156] sexes.[2] Endurance of pain is a heroic action of the male, while crying and weeping is only expected from women. The difference of 'ethos' between the two sexes reflects itself also in their public attitudes towards a person's [764] death. While the men solemnly gather in the guest house for the obsequies, [152] and public demonstration of weeping is only expected from them on their return journey to the guest house after the burial, the women express their grief in almost hysterical weeping, wailing and dirging.

852 154 During the circumcision ceremony the boy's aggression is however allowed to express itself during the procession that follows the operation, as while he is carried on his way to the mosque and the Nile, he is allowed to break an egg by throwing it at any person in the procession. On the other hand, the girl is given free scope in crying, screaming and asking for help.

852 585 One cannot fail to see the connection between circumcision and marriage, the former being a preparation for the latter, and the similarities between the public celebration of the two events are striking, as will be shown later in discussing the marriage ceremony. A circumcised boy or girl is normally referred to as 'bridegroom' or 'bride' in anticipation of their future role in life. The connection between circumcision and marriage is also obvious from beliefs and rituals common to both events; the circumcised boy as well as the bridegroom must visit the mosque or gaze on the Nile. The belief is that on his or her circumcision or wedding, a person could be deprived of fertility and potency, and hence great care [754] must be taken to avoid the evil eye, and to avoid those who are sterile and desire fertility, who may well seize the opportunity to use or cross over 852 the circumcised or married man's instruments and clothes. The connec- 842 tion between circumcision and fertility could be also inferred from the

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[1] Edward Lane mentions that during his time boys used to be dressed in girls' garments in the circumcision ceremony. *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, p. 59.

[2] The word 'ethos' here is used in the sense in which Bateson has defined it as 'the culturally standardised system of organisation of the instincts and the emotions of individuals'. Naven, p. [illegible].

fact that the mother, in taking the child to the Nile, throws his foreskin, 852
enclosed in a loaf of bread, into the water, and washes the 'mirwad' 849
(antimony stick) used in the operation in the waters of the Nile. This relationship is also evidenced by the fact that circumcision, like weaning, should take place at least two or three days before the appearance of the [821]
new moon, otherwise the child is liable to be 'tied up' (mushahir), the consequence of which may be that the wound might not heal quickly, or that the child might eventually be sterile.

Children show great interest in the circumcision ceremony, as it is a 852
great occasion in which they associate with the circumcised child, eat with him, enjoy themselves, inviting people for the ceremony, or going on the children's round with their palm-tree branches, or getting sweets and peanuts during the procession. They usually tell you of the good food they had or the new clothes they wore on the occasion of their younger sibling's or cousin's circumcision. On asking some of the schoolchildren about events during which they felt happy, they invariably gave the answer of a sibling's circumcision or marriage. The educative significance of the cere- [861]
mony for the older children, who witness and attend this public celebration, though indirect, is quite obvious. The social norms based on mutual obligations, the meaning of kinship and family solidarity, are concomitant in the ritual ceremony.

One cannot discuss circumcision without reference to the psycho-analytical explanation of the ritual. Freud sees in it the castration complex, which is derived from the Oedipus situation. He states that in some primitive societies circumcision is common and is performed at the age of initiation into manhood, and it was only as a secondary development that it was transferred to the early years of life. He continues: 'It is of great interest to find that among primitive peoples, circumcision is combined with cutting the hair, and knocking out of teeth, or is replaced by them, and that our children, who cannot possibly have any knowledge of this, in fact, treat these two operations, in the anxiety with which they react to them, as equivalents of castration.'[1] In Silwa such an anxiety concerning castration is evident in the adults' threatening their children to re-circumcise them even if they are already circumcised, and it manifested itself in one of the children's dreams described later.[2]

Some psycho-analysts maintain that circumcision, as an initiating ceremony of the child by his elders, helps to conduct the growing children across those difficult thresholds of life transformations that demand change in the patterns, not only of conscious, but also of unconscious life.[3] Géza Roheim maintains that circumcision represents a process of the child's growth from the passive Oedipus situation to the active orientation towards the loved object. 'The period of life which conditions the transition from

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[1] S. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, footnote, p. 153.

[2] See Appendix XI.

[3] Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Bollingen Series, New York, 1949, p. 10.

852 mother to wife is dramatized. It is subject to operations: it is represented in symbols.'[1] The circumcision ritual, as practised in Silwa, lends itself to a considerable degree to Roheim's explanation, especially when one remembers such rituals as the disposing of the foreskin by putting it in a hole in a loaf of bread, the cleansing of the antimony stick in the Nile, the going round of the boys, holding the long palm-tree sticks in their hands, the admonition to the circumcised boy not to show his penis to anyone but his mother before it heals, as well as the other beliefs connected with fertility.

Sociologists, however, cannot be satisfied with such explanations. Viewed as an element in the totality of the cultural situation the 'castration' problem cannot be fully understood in the orthodox Freudian connotation with its biological bias. A sociological interpretation has to include the questions: Why does a child who is considered to be circumcised by 'angels' have to undergo the ceremony? Why is such an operation
852 dramatized on such an elaborate social occasion? Indeed such a ceremony
867? telescopes the individual's development as a process in which he is caught up in a net of reciprocal social obligations infused with moral and religious sanctions. Considering 'castration' in the context of social organization in Silwa, and as the villagers view it, it must be regarded as a social occasion with a religious sanction for declaring publicly the alignment of the child to his sex group. Thus, the child would identify itself with the social role of father or mother by becoming aware of the social implications and consequences of behaviour relevant to its sex group. The community submits its children to an operation around which everything is done to heighten the moral and social temperature of its culture and to induce a state of nervous super-excitation through which the youngsters may receive the adult's indelible stamp.[2]

[1] Géza Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*, p. 18.

[2] See Edwin W. Smith, 'Indigenous Education in Africa', in *Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*; and B. Malinowski, *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*, London, 1927.

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Chapter Six

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

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In this chapter it is intended to outline the procedures and methods that are adopted in this community to inculcate the norms that transform the child, who is relatively peripheral, into the adult who is the central link in village social life. The transition can be considered, as Fortes puts it, as one 'from an economically passive burden into a producer, from a biological unit into a social personality, irretrievably cast in the habits, disposition, and notions characteristic of his culture'.[1] Fortes has also provided the writer with certain insight in evaluating the learning process as a by-product of the cultural routine, a phenomenon which obtains in the village community. It is obvious that in Silwa the education of children is not surrounded, as in some primitive societies, with ceremonies of initiation, elaborate ritual, or narration of totemic myths. Learning accrues mainly through children's observing, imitating and assisting their adults in their everyday activities. For the villagers express the educational process through emphasizing life and time as the most important educational agencies which mould and influence the character, and provide the experience. The difference between an adult and a child 858 is, on the whole, quantitative rather than qualitative. The former knows and thus conforms to the cultural norms, while the latter does not. The commonly used word is not the classical word 'tifl' (infant) but another word which is also classical but literally means 'ignorant' (jahil)—and thus identifies ignorance with childhood. It is because of this ignorance of expected skills, norms and attitudes that the children are considered inferior to the adult, and the younger as subservient to the elder.

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Here socialization is to include its two aspects of technical training and cultural or regulatory training.[2] In Chapter I it was shown how a boy or a girl is progressively introduced to the economic pursuits of adults, and what skills were expected of them at successive stages of their growth. It was also emphasized how the child was expected to take over from his

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[1] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 6.

[2] See Introduction.

121 868 father or his elder brother (or mother or elder sister) those tasks which he or she is capable of doing. The child must work for his family as a necessary requisite to enjoying their protection. This is made explicit to [858] children by parents who, on seeing their negligent children enjoying their food, would rebuke them by saying, 'Yes, you only know how to eat and drink', or 'You know how to increase the size of your buttocks'. There is nothing to add here concerning technical training, and further reference will be made in connection with its relation to cultural training. The lack of mastery in skills required from boys at a particular age is attributed to inefficient training by the parents. Once in the fields I heard a father blaming his son for his inability to get the right fodder for the cow by saying, 'The fault is not yours; it is the fault of him who has brought you up'.

The process of growing up is envisaged as a way of disciplining the 867 child to conform to the adults' standards, and to comply with what their elders expect them to do, thus acquiring the qualities of being polite—'muaddab'. In adult eyes, the period of childhood is a nuisance, and childhood [858] activities, especially play, are a waste of time. The 'giving of adab' to children is the guarantee of the survival of the social structure, with its patrilineal bias and respect relationships, especially filial piety, which is sanctioned by the Koranic injunctions. To become 'muaddab' is the ideal set up by parents for their children, and the adherence to which is constantly impressed upon them. The ideal, although emphasizing subservience and obedience of the children to their parents, is actually extended to include the whole range of children's activities for which their elders are responsible. The adult sense of keenness to bring their children to realize this ideal can be traced in parents' prayers that God might not make their children disobedient or cause them shame. One of the most effective insults to a boy or a girl is the provoking remark that he or she has no people to discipline him or her. 'She is a divorced girl' or 'unrestrained'; or for a boy, 'he is a pushing boy' (literally 'ascending'). Such comments are addressed to young persons who show no respect to people of their parents' age or who transgress the limits of behaviour expected from their age or sex group, e.g. a boy walking through a gathering of men, a married man insulting his father, a girl shouting from the roof of the house while fetching fuel, or a girl caught entering the guest house.[1]

The acquiring of the procedures of 'adab', which incorporate the prescribed standards of behaviour, has also a religious sanction behind it from the prophetic tradition. It is related that the Prophet said, 'God has disciplined me, and has perfected my discipline'. The word 'muaddab' is applied to a child who defaecates outside the house at the age of three or four, and goes further and further away from the house as he grows older. After the age of ten, for instance, he is not considered 'muaddab' unless he covers his genitals while urinating. A boy of fourteen to sixteen would be 'muaddab' if he played in the evenings only, and still better, if [562] he did not play games at all. Boys and girls become 'muaddab' if they do not mix in play after the age of eleven or twelve. After the age of twelve, a girl would be considered 'muaddab' if she drops her glance and keeps clear of male gatherings, and when she becomes older, covers part of her face if she is passing by a group of men. A boy is 'muaddab' if he recognizes that he should sit in the back row on going to the mosque. As Mahmoud put it, a disciplined boy or girl is one who knows when and where to sit and stand, where and when to put his or her feet and thus become 'Ibn halal' (literally 'heir to the permissible'). Ali, on the other hand, expressed the importance of 'giving adab' to children by saying that it is believed that one of the signs of the end of this world will be when discipline and modesty (adab wa haya) disappear from the acts and deeds of the people. 871

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[1] Use of the guest house is restricted to males.

The keynote to the educational process is the eagerness of the adults to create a docile attitude in their children and thus make them acquire filial piety.[1] The children readily accept the authority of their seniors, [561] whether in work or play, and they endeavour to avoid their anger. This ready acceptance of the authority of those older than the child is epitomized in the axiom: 'He who is one day older than you, is in fact wiser by one year', which is a common saying often repeated by adolescent boys and girls. A child of twelve told me that it was always better to avoid the outbursts of one's elders: one of their curses might receive a hearing from God.

The ideal norm of 'adab' is a value which also has its religious sanction, 577 as a pious son (ibn salih) is synonymous with 'muaddab'. Such a value does not only include the child's economic services and his observance of the expected social behaviour, but also implies a pattern of reciprocity between child and family. A father who neglects the care of his 'polite' children may be frequently exposed to illness, failure of crop, or death of cattle. Moreover, a family that infringes on the moral and religious code may consequently have sickly children. This connection between the moral values and the welfare of the family could be illustrated by the children's swearing by their parents' life and honour.[2] One also hears from the villagers that a loss of a son, or a camel, or sudden illness, is caused by the dealing of the inflicted person in usury, his swearing untruthfully by the name of Allah or his children, his giving false evidence in court, or spreading malicious gossip. It is clear that the welfare of the family members, children as well as adults, is contingent on some basic reciprocal relations fused with moral and religious sanctions.[3]

Besides learning from their parents and elders, children also learn (778)

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[1] M. Fortes maintains that filial piety, in patrilineal societies, is a value counteracting the suppressed antagonism between father and son, and mother and daughter. *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*, p. 347. [154]

[2] A father may swear 'by the neck' of his son where life is supposed to be located. [826]

[3] See Chapter III for religious justification of offspring.

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

861 Besides learning from their parents and elders, children also learn through their association with slightly older boys and girls (by three or four years but certainly not more than five or six years) who usually assume the role of leadership or teachers in work or play. As in Tale society, every pupil becomes, in some situation, a teacher for others.

It must be noted, however, that the behaviour pattern and motivation in the learning situation where adults are involved are different from those of the age-group learning situation. In the former, subservience, respect, and fear are expected, while in the latter rivalry and reciprocity on equal terms are the norms. If the child does not come up to adult expectation, it is because 'it deliberately twists its neck which should be straightened by a slap'. Discipline and compulsion are the means for enforcing conformity and 'adab' on children by their elders. On the other hand, amongst the age groups, mocking, ridiculing, and scoffing at those who do not reach the expected level of maturity are the pressures exerted by their peers. In this connection, nicknames are frequently used by children to
[551] single out the ones who are laggards in their social maturity, partly a continuation of the sibling rivalry pattern of motivation.

The two following examples indicate some of the ways in which boys deal with each other. A boy of fifteen who did not appear weak found it rather difficult for some time to fill the panniers of his camel with fertilizer, and other boys had to help him. Failing to perform the task expected from boys of his age, his fellows decided to put a girl's headcloth round his head-cap, by taking off his turban. Then he was tied to the panniers and the other boys led the half-laden camel to the field. This method, occasionally resorted to by such boys, is supposed to awaken the sense of shame in those who are not sufficiently keen on doing what is expected of them. The other example is that of a fight of a boy of about ten
[illegible] years old with other boys because he 'broke wind' while they were playing. When asked, he denied the fact, and they went on smelling each other. When they discovered that he was the culprit, they started building him a grave in which they buried a stone as a symbol for the boy, shouting 'the farter is here, the farter is here'. They also bewailed him as adults would bewail a deceased person, by saying, 'There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet'. Indeed, lack of control and modesty after the age of ten can be a source of ridicule for children about this age.

857 Moreover, if restraint and docility are the keynotes of child behaviour towards adults, a free and impulsive life reigns amongst children themselves. Their own problems must be kept to themselves and not communicated whenever possible to their adults, who are not expected to enquire about children's activities. For children, it is gossip that a child would go and tell his parents what other boys and girls have been saying or doing. If two boys or more start quarrelling with each other, they should fight the issue out for themselves. The laying of complaints by children before
[866] their elders about quarrels with other children is greatly discouraged, and when complaints are taken up by *fussy* parents, they might keep the whole

neighbourhood wrangling for some time. In this case, boys who have been sneaking are referred to by other boys as 'women', or in the case of girls are branded as 'loose' or 'prostitutes'. Parents' advice to their children is, 'Hit back him who hits you'. 859 866

Thus, before adolescence, a boy, not only through overhearing the gossip of his elders, but also through his age group norms, becomes aware of the significance of gossip as a means of social control. He is perhaps the cause of gossip or included in it, and this would expose him to shaming or avoidance by other children. The boy's friends might not speak to him and this would make him stand exposed and isolated. 867

Thus, it is obvious that though any signs of children's aggression towards adults is tabooed and punishable, their expression of hostility towards their age-mates is given full play. Rivalry and competition are mainly directed both in the adult and in the child world towards equals. Rivalry between generations seldom occurs, as it is mainly horizontal and not vertical. 865 561

The cultural axiom is for the adult to give and for the young to receive: to accept aid in kind or money from one's elders is permissible, while the reverse would be humiliating, or at least embarrassing, unless prescribed by kinship obligations, such as aid rendered by the son to his father in old age. 183 561

There is a vivid contrast between the lively, free, and rough behaviour of children in their groups and their shy and diffident manners when they are attending grown-ups, while eating or during any celebration in the house. On being punished or rebuked by his elders, the child is expected to obey, while if he shows any submissiveness, if wronged by his 'pals', he would be punished by his parents and would be asked to retaliate for himself. A boy was called Abdu the Batil (the coward) by his pals, a name for which he seemed to have no outward resentment. On asking the boy about how he got this nickname, he told me that his father had applied the name to him and told the other boys with whom he associated to call him so, as his father was annoyed by his constant appeals to his parents to protect him from other children. 866

After reviewing the general atmosphere of the two educative spheres in the child's life, it is appropriate to discuss the means by which some social norms are impressed on him. As mentioned earlier, one of the cardinal virtues of a disciplined child is his respect for his elders. Till the age of four or five, this respect expresses itself in the young boy, on being introduced to a gathering in the house, touching the older person's hands with his lips and forehead. When the child grows older, this is replaced by a handshake followed immediately by his withdrawal from the adult gathering. The sign of respect by kissing the older person's hand with one's lips and forehead, although it ceases to apply amongst village people themselves, would still be practised by older boys and adults towards strangers visiting the house. Moreover, this is always the sign of respect for 867

869 a son meeting his father after a long absence, as well as the greeting of adults for religious men and those who are believed to be endowed with 'baraka'—holiness.

Whilst in the first five or six years the child's respect for its parents and elders is inculcated mainly through physical gestures and intimacy, the respect later on is expected in terms of a decrease in word intimacy and physical proximity. Moreover, certain manners must be observed, such as walking behind the father or an elder and not abreast of him, standing up or at least sitting properly on the ground on his approach, dismounting from donkey-back on seeing the father in a formal gathering, and so on. Whether in attending to the hand-washing of guests, the distribution of tea amongst them, or in shaking hands with them, a fairly definite order of precedence is observed by the child and even by adults themselves. On the whole, with the progress of the child in age, details of etiquette are gradually enforced upon him. It is also interesting to note in this respect that a father when taking his son of four or five years to the field, would make him ride behind him and not in front, and one cannot argue that this is merely a matter of convenience as fathers who take their sons in front of them are considered to be spoiling them.

It is important here to distinguish between two categories of behaviour with regard to respect relationships, and this distinction is mainly related to whether there are any outsiders or public onlookers. The child, for instance, is allowed a certain amount of latitude in conforming to the external tokens of respect to its parents in the intimate circle of the family, for example, to sit on the bed while the father is sitting on the ground, to make himself a nuisance with the mother, or to hit back when she scolds him. Yet this is severely disapproved of and punished if there is a visitor in the house, or if done outside the house. This is the root of the absolute bonds of kinship behaviour on formal occasions. No plea could absolve the person from not fulfilling his obligations towards his relatives on public occasions such as mourning or exchange of gifts on ceremonial occasions. The failure to fulfil such obligations, as the villagers put it, 'makes a special history for the person'. The distinction between formal and informal behaviour gradually recedes as the child grows older and he is supposed to approach progressively for all occasions the formal expectations of behaviour.[1]

593 The general pattern of behaviour between the child and its elders is thus largely one of dominance, submission couched in the term 'filial piety'. The filial sentiment, however, is not taught to or expressed by the child in any sentimental phrases. It was a great joke amongst the children in one neighbourhood to repeat statements of an urban child whom they
[369] heard saying 'I love my father, I love my mother'. Such open expressions

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[1] R. Firth distinguishes between formal and informal behaviour. In the latter there are more individual differences and variations; while the former is enjoined upon each member of the society and the observance and fulfilment of formal behaviour is regarded as the sure test for the harmonious functioning of society. *We, the Tikopia*, p. 175.

of filial sentiment are considered by the children as one of the ways in which Cairo people spoil their sons and daughters. Children's respect for and devotion to parents must be absolute and unconditional and do not have to be verbalized. Yet, on the other hand, the appeal to please the mother or father is usually invoked to persuade the child to behave properly or to perform certain duties. 'Fetch fuel for mother so that she can say that her daughter is good.' 'Wear this garment so that uncle's people will say they have a good boy.' While the affection of blood relatives is used to stimulate and motivate the child, he is not expected to express his sentiment towards them directly. 573 369

During early childhood, kinship terms are learnt, and by the age of five, the children I spoke to were quite capable of telling the categories of paternal uncle and aunt, maternal uncle and aunt, cousins and nephews and nieces. As anthropologists have repeatedly pointed out, the child does not start off in life with a full set of kinship terms, but gradually, and not without difficulty, fits itself into the framework provided for it by its elders.[1] During its development, contacts and associations, a child begins to know what type of behaviour and sentiment is expected from him towards different relatives. In terms of behaviour the above-mentioned children distinguished between those closely-related children with whom they could play freely, more co-operatively, and possibly with more superficial wrangling, and those with whom they could not play in the same way; between those from whom they could demand a piece of bread or a bit of onion, and those from whom they could not; between those who could, without suspecting malicious intentions, accept their curses and those who would resent such curses. They also knew that their close relatives are those by whom they can be protected or punished, and whom they fear and love, and to whose houses they can stray, accepting food without fear of being punished by the parents. One of the children told me that his mother punished him for going with another boy to the latter's house. She rebuked him by saying that those who offered him food would call him a son of beggars, and that it would have been quite different had he gone to his grandfather's people. Children who stray quite often into houses which are not those of close relatives, are sometimes dubbed by their elders as paupers ('fakeers', who roam about and knock at the gate of Allah). Such an excuse is given by the elders to avoid the sense of shame that their children might bring to them. In this way a child is made to learn the difference between the easy flow of mutual obligations between close relatives and the strain of accepting hospitality from distant people which is considered almost as a debt. On such occasions, one also sees the importance of parental obligations towards their children, whose hunger would reflect on their parental duties and prestige.[2] 867

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[1] R. Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, p. 172.

[2] For such connection between hunger and prestige, see Audrey Richards, *Hunger and Work in a Savage Society*, pp. 43–4.

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

867 In this way the child experiences the processes of kinship, entering
gradually widening circles of people with concomitant responsibilities and
meanings. About the age of seven, for instance, kinship sentiment means
running errands for close relatives, borrowing things, helping in carrying
presents and gifts for them, and so forth. A child runs errands for his
[603] paternal and maternal uncles and grandfathers whether they live with the
father or not, whether they are on good terms or not. Beyond these
[604] categories of kinship, the child is not compelled to run errands for other
relatives who are not in harmony with his parents, on pain of punishment.
Through the disciplinary powers of the uncle and the parent's family in
general, the child finds himself more drawn towards his mother's people
whom he usually goes to visit with his mother, because, as mentioned
earlier, he finds them less censorious than paternal relatives. These visits
to the maternal relatives are more frequent in the case of adolescent boys
who can enjoy a relaxing and more genial relationship in their leisure
time at night. As they grow older, kinship for boys and girls means help
and assistance on ceremonial events of the extended family and the clan.
It is significant to notice that children use only eight terms of address:
[601] father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, paternal and maternal uncle
and aunt. The last four categories of uncle and aunt are only used when
those addressed are married; otherwise they are addressed merely by their
[184] first names. In Silwa, unlike many other rural areas in the province of
Kena, boys and girls tend, on the whole, to drop these four categories of
kinship address after their marriage and usually call their uncles and aunts
by their first names. It seems that after marriage boys and girls attain a
[885] certain amount of social independence, and thus they do not address
[601] uncles and aunts by kinship titles in the same way as they do not address
the latter if they are not married, or if the age difference is slight. The
recognition of blood relation, however, is usually used as a test for young
children by their elders: one might hear an elder questioning a younger,
'Who is your uncle? Who is your cousin? Where do they live? Whom do
you prefer?' and so on. The adolescents have a few puzzles depending on
[534] kinship terms, and division of inheritance, the solution of which lies in the
understanding of a linguistic twist, or a pun.[1]

The child's recognition of the importance of his family and his identification
with it is acquired at a very early stage of his development. The child
[195] usually talks in the first person plural, by saying 'our donkey, our camel'.
In fact, it is preferable to use the plural pronoun rather than the singular,
as it is considered to be modest and less presumptuous. This identification
with the family is also evidenced by the fact that in children's swearing,
and in that of the adults for that matter, the curse is directed towards the
father, the mother, the family, or to one's origin (seed). It is very seldom
indeed that a curse refers directly to the child or the person addressed.
When children are praised by visitors, such praise is couched in terms such

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[1] See Appendix VII for boys' riddles.

as 'you are the son of people who are like princes', and this type of praise 867
is more common than that related to the good qualities of the child himself.
In this way, the identification with, and submergence into, the family is impressed upon the child. It is not surprising that on asking many young children about their names, their immediate answer was 'I am the son of so-and-so'. If the identity of the children is enquired about by the villagers, the question is normally formulated as "Whose son are you?" It is noticeable that identification there goes with a sense of pride in one's family [857]
which causes wrangling and quarrelling amongst children as well as adults. [578]
The following conversation is typical of children's altercations in this connection. One child said: 'My father is better than yours; he never worked for someone else, and his turban has always been white. My people (our in Arabic) are all leaders (Arab sheikhs)'. The other boy retorted: 'All your people are liars and deceivers. We offer a larger tray of food for guests and on funeral occasions than yours. Your cow is "rotting" and its bones are sticking out from starvation. What is the use of just talking?'[1]

At an early age the child acquires the sense of property and becomes 867
interested in possessions. Many uncles, or grandparents, for example, give 427
presents to the children. Such a practice also forms the basis of one of the cardinal interests of children in animals. On my entering a house, a child insisted on showing me his goat, which his grandfather had sent him as a gift on the occasion of his circumcision. Sometimes parents may allocate a young calf or sheep to a boy, and in the case of a girl, a mother might keep a certain chicken or duck.[2] This is regarded as the child's own property, 'ala zimmatuh' or 'ala bakhtu', to be kept 'for his sake and luck', and consequently, at least theoretically, the parents do not dispose of the animal except for his or her benefit, e.g. to clothe him or her, or to buy things for him or her, or in the case of killing the animal or the chicken, the child would get the lion's share of the meat. In practice, however, under the pressure of hardship, the parents would more often sell the animal or give it away for their own account.

It is not difficult to see that the main objective of child training is to 861
cultivate a docile and yielding disposition in the child as the main characteristic of a 'muaddab'. For the attainment of such a goal, the motive of fear is very much worked upon in the training of children by their elders during the period of childhood. Parents usually resort to making the child conform to their wishes by frightening it with an imaginary creature called 'silowa'. There is hardly any young child who does not fear this chimera [776]
which is supposed to eat children, especially at night. It is held by children that 'silowa' is a huge, ferocious animal that eats its young after suckling

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[1] A. Tannous remarked that in the village community of Lebanon, swearing in mild cases usually refers to strictly personal characteristics, whereas in intense conflicts, more violent terms, usually involving the family, are used. See his article 'Group Behaviour in the Village Community of Lebanon', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVIII, 1942, pp. 231–39.

[2] Such a chicken is usually marked by a thread tied round its leg or by cutting one of its claws.

861 776 them for some time. Boys and girls between the ages of four and seven are often heard talking about the 'silowa' roaming through the village at night on its way from the hills to its nightly drink from the Nile. The 'ghool' is another imaginary beast, with a huge and hairy body, to whose attacks the children are exposed during their sleep. Other ferocious animals, such as dogs and wolves, are also invoked by mothers to induce the child to come home early or to accept food.[1]

857 Some of the children's games concern themselves with the establishment of a hierarchy in the order of fears. A child would move his fingers in front of another child's eyes, challenging him, by asking: 'Whom do you fear more, your father or God?' If the child blinks, then that indicates that he fears his father more than God. This is sometimes asked of a younger child without attempting to make him blink, merely to test his knowledge. The same puzzle is also posed in a slightly different manner. An older boy would ask a younger boy the question: 'There is a very small boy in the market whom nobody can see, do you fear him or me more?' The proper answer is expected to be 'him' as the invisible small boy in the market is supposed to signify God. In this type of guessing game, it is obvious that 869 the children learn that fear is the symptom of recognizing the dominance of the supernatural authority of God over that of the worldly authority of the father. Moreover, children test each other through the expression of fear as to whose authority they first submit, the paternal or the maternal uncle.

The fear of sacred objects is also inculcated during the period of childhood. The child is made to believe in their blessings as well as their dangers. He is taken to a saint's tomb or wears a Koranic charm when he is ill. At the same time he is warned against urinating near a saint's tomb or running about in the cemetery for fear of incurring the saint's wrath. The same double attitude is inculcated in him with regard to bread, milk, treading on written paper, passing over ashes from the burning of a charm made by someone else, or stepping over someone's legs. Durkheim has pointed out that the sacred objects are invariably thought of as possessing the power of sanctity and danger simultaneously. Psycho-analysts have traced this cultural phenomenon to the emergence into the field of consciousness of the dual role of the mother, and the ambivalent attitude connected with it. This probably mirrors the process whereby 'good objects' such as the mother or her milk turn into 'bad objects' such as the denying and frustrating mother and faeces.[2]

[M1] [1] E. S. Stevens writes: 'The Silowa occupies much the same role in Iraki legend as the witch or ogress in Western fairy tales. She is a water spirit, for she dwells in the river or in caves near running streams. Her body is covered with long hair, her breasts are pendent, reaching her knees, and when she wishes to suckle her children, whom she carries on her back, she throws her breasts over her shoulder. . . . She is fond of human flesh . . . she has a partiality for human lovers.' *Folk Tales of Irak*, p. xvi, O.U.P., 1931. The classical word for 'Silowa' is 'Silah', pl. 'Saali'.

[2] George Devereux, 'Magic Substances and Narcotics of the Mohave Indians', in *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, Vol. XXII, 1949, p. 115.

Parents also scare their children by threatening them with dangerous 861 creatures like scorpions and snakes. They scold them by saying: 'May you 825 be bitten by a scorpion or a snake.' Apart from the fact that such scolding may be taken as a warning against the danger of such creatures, it is considered as a frightening threat to the children. Some children told me that they would prefer their parents swearing at them by the snake rather than by the scorpion. They told me that the reason for their hatred of the scorpion is that it was a wicked creature, which stings ruthlessly and indiscriminately, whereas the snake bites only when it is provoked. An older lad present remarked that the scorpion is the enemy of Moslems. He related that once upon a time a snake curled round a man's leg and yet nothing dangerous happened to the man; then a scorpion passed by and bit both the snake and the man, and caused their deaths. In the same gathering of boys, one of them told me that he actually saw the 'silowa' passing by him while he was sleeping near the harvest. He went on to say that after it had quenched its thrist, it gave a terrifying sound before going to its dwelling in the hills.

During childhood the instilling of fear is one of the expedients that parents constantly use to repress their children and make them docile. Yet I noticed that older boys, as well as adults, were highly ashamed of 152 admitting fear of anything; to be courageous like a lion is the sign of a daring male, while for a girl, timidity is not a defective trait. One might 154 suggest, in the light of Bateson and Mead's findings in Bali, that the horrifying mythical images of 'silowa' and 'ghool' are a cultural projection of the ambivalent feeling towards the parents, the 'silowa' symbolizing the mother, and the 'ghool' representing the father. Parents are thus represented as being both loving and affectionate as well as frightening and devouring.[1] 159 Children also tell the story of the enticing man who comes to them while asleep, wakes them up, offers them dates, and leads them to an unknown world in the mountains. During the journey he reiterates that the child's mother is in front of him, and whenever the child asks about his mother he is always told that she is waiting at a short distance ahead. Thus the enticing man, by taking the children away from their homes, devours them when he feels secure.

Fear responses were quite striking during the Rorschach testing of the children as revealed by the frequent occurrence of responses such as 'silowa', 'ghool', 'scorpion', 'snake', 'wolf', 'fire', and 'blood', many of which do not actually match the blots chosen.

Moreover in the dreams of both boys and girls, the manifestations of fear, repression, and anxiety cannot escape one's notice, however one interprets these dreams. In boys' dreams, one comes across images of a child afraid of the village barber cutting off his head, the ground on which the boy is lying sinking down, a boy being chased by older people, another boy being stung by a scorpion and his family wailing for him, and so on,

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[1] See also Chapter VIII on 'Children's Tales'.

159 Girls' dreams reveal the images of being in danger of drowning in the canal, black jinns with frightening eyes following them, men beating them, and so on.[1]

776 Children also show fear of certain places believed to be inhabited by evil spirits, for example, deserted or ruined houses, deserted wells, spots where a murder was committed, some certain areas round the cemetery, a spot where a train ran down a person or an animal. It is believed by children and many adults that the person who meets a violent end will [775] reappear as a violent ghost—'sul' or 'marid'—haunting people at night and causing them harm by frightening them with its fiery eyes. A boy of twelve told me of this horrified feeling, when on an errand at night the 'sul' followed him, throwing stones at him, but it disappeared suddenly when the boy passed by a gathering of people on his way, as the 'sul' only appears to a person walking alone at night. Children are also warned against talking to or looking at their shadows, especially on moonlit nights, [822] as this might lead them to insanity. The girls are warned against looking [828] too much at their shadows at night or at their reflection in the mirror for fear of the same malady. To avoid evil spirits, however, children are told to recite the 'Fatiha' or any part of the Koran on passing near the haunted places. Charms are also held to protect children from such dangers.

154 In discussing these sources and manifestations of fear, especially those connected with the supernatural world, one cannot ignore the psychoanalytical interpretation which considers spirits and demons as projections of repressed aggressive tendencies against beloved persons. The writer is inclined to explain children's fears and their genuine belief in the existence of ogresses and bogies in the village as a projection of repressed hostile attitudes towards their parents or other members of the family.[2]

571 In this connection, one is tempted to ask the question: to what extent does the incentive of fear as a motive, so much emphasized in the village, affect the undercurrent trends of the social relationship between the villagers? The tension and suspicion discerned in the interpersonal relationships epitomized in the saying that 'every man has an enemy' could be related to the excess in resorting to both fear and rivalry motives in 773 the bringing up of children. The favourite legendary figure of 'Jiha' is liked by both children and adults, because of his trickery and cunning that always enables him to take revenge.[3] It could also be suggested that 154 this anxiety and fear through which children are stimulated is partially responsible for the adult defense mechanism of rivalry and caution.

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[1] See Appendix XI.

[2] S. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, pp. 87, 140.

For a reference to the striking feelings of ambivalence of children towards their parents in primitive society, see M. Fortes, 'Parenthood in Primitive Society', where he says that as the parents in primitive societies are responsible for the passing on of cultural traditions, relations of children towards their parents tend to be ambivalent. There is commonly a feeling of hostility underlying the affection and gratitude of children felt towards their parents. *Man*, May 1952, p. 65.

[3] See Chapter VIII.

responsible for the adult defence mechanism of rigidity and caution. 000 However, one of the well-known characteristics of the Egyptian fellah is 157 his stubbornness, obstinacy and tenacity, which sometimes take the form of an obsession.

Connected with producing fear in the children is the violent and bad- 861 tempered manner in which adults administer punishment to them. Punishment, however, may be in the form of fulminations or curses, or it may be corporal. As mentioned earlier, a father may curse his son by saying 'Curse on your father; a curse on your people; a curse on your origin (seed)', and so on. It seems that such curses have their effect on the children. A child of about nine years old told me that the curse of his parents, especially that of his mother, when she uncovers her head, is a thing which he tries to avoid; one cannot enter Paradise if one invokes one's parents' anger, and their blessings increase one's span of life. Punishment can also take the form of denouncing the boy as a girl, or condemning him as a homosexual, and also through depriving him of his food or his share of meat. On certain occasions, if the child shows reluctance to comply with, or to conform to, its elders' commands, they impugn one of its senses by expressing their disapproval or reproach in phrases such as, 'Aren't you listening?' 'Haven't you got eyes to see?' 'Are you blind?' 'Don't you smell?' 'Don't you feel?' 'Haven't you got blood?' Such phrases imply that the child should have done the accepted thing without being prompted, because he has only to make use of one of his senses. It is occasionally pointed out to the child that his jaw which uttered the words, or his hand that committed the offence, or his ears that heard the unpermissible, should be punished.

Corporal punishment is not uncommon either by beating, striking, whipping or slapping. Such punishment is inflicted upon the child normally after he has committed a serious misdemeanour, such as talking back at his parents while being rebuked, throwing stones at his mother, causing trouble with the neighbours' children, or on complaints being made against him by an older person. The child's ambivalent attitude towards its parents or uncles expresses itself in its appeal for their mercy when it is thrashed by one of them. He makes a screaming appeal, by crying out: 'O father, O father, by the name of the Prophet, O father', even if the father himself happens to be the one who is thrashing him.

The mother invariably gets the worst of the child's temper, aggression [865] and disobedience, and consequently she is apt to administer punishment more frequently than the father. She is the parent with whom the child comes into active contact in terms of give and take. The child feels her punishing powers as he breaks things, loiters on being sent on an errand, loses money which he was given to buy things from the shop, or when he makes himself a nuisance when visitors are in the house, and similar other misdemeanours. Having more contacts with children's problems of up- 865 bringing, the mother tends to be the target of their ambivalence; they

865 wrangle and quarrel with her, are rude to her, run outside the house and
throw stones at the door or climb the wall and swear at her. On the other
hand, children feel that the mother is their most reliable source of care
861 and affection, and that she is more accessible and amenable than the
593 father. In this capacity she is the one usually approached for expressing
their wishes or asked to mediate between them and the father. Mothers
themselves recognize that their treatment of children is different from
that of the father. This is epitomized in the mothers' popular saying to
their children in persuading them to obey them: 'On the death of my
father I eat dates; on the death of my mother I eat hot coal.' In this way
the mother tries to win from her offspring assistance and service as she is
not invested with the same power of authority as the father. On the other
hand, withdrawal from the father, keeping away from his bed while he
[867] is asleep, and keeping quiet while he is about the house, is told and retold
to children by the mother or older siblings for fear of punishment. The
father's authority cannot be flouted; and a change in the tone of his voice
must be seriously considered. Although his punishment might be less
frequent than that of the mother, yet it is certainly more severely administered. While the former pinches the ear, or the thigh, and seldom slaps,
the latter normally slaps and thrashes with a rope or a cane.

861 It is also worth noting here that very little chance is given to the child
to justify his misdemeanour, and hardly any effort is made to persuade
him to avoid falling into the same error. Moreover, in administering
punishment, there is no consistency or regularity; for the same offence the
child might be beaten harshly, or his offence allowed to pass unnoticed.
This depends, of course, on the parents' mood, or on their feeling towards
the child at that particular time.

577 Such methods for disciplining the child normally lead to the child's
attempts to tell lies or go for things in a roundabout way to evade punishment. He would swear that he has not committed a fault and that it is
someone else who is responsible for it, or that he was forced by older or
stronger boys to do it.[1] Deceptive tricks are frequently adopted in games
[857] when, for instance, a boy tries to frighten another boy by saying that the
latter's father is approaching with a stick and thus seek to compel him to
leave the game. An older boy, in trying to deceive younger children,
would run in front of them shouting in terror, 'The Silowa is coming, the
Silowa is coming', and the young boys would disperse. One boy might
tell a group of boys an untrue story, and if the teller succeeds in making
his listeners 'swallow' it he would vaunt his triumph over them by saying,
'I've been telling lies. I've cut your ears off—Kaddabt 'alaikum, gattat
wadanaikum.'

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[1] It is interesting to note that in the Kuttab (Koran school), Kuttab sheikh enquires from one of the boys about his misdemeanour and the other boys volunteer without being asked to give evidence confirming the boy's offence. With this also goes constant attempts of children to correct each other's behaviour or ways of learning or attention.

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

It does not require any emphasis here to point out that the effects of 577
these techniques of fear as forcing children to resort to lies and deception
are reflected later in the prevailing atmosphere of adult life which is [156]
charged with suspicion, secrecy and apprehension. Fear, moreover, is an efficient lever for the maintenance of social cohesion in the pattern of father-son relationship, and hence it is not surprising to find the common saying that 'fear is a blissful thing' (al khof baraka).

The popular sayings connected with the administering of punishment 861
are also varied and inconsistent, perhaps to maintain a balance and to avoid excess. On the one hand one hears phrases such as 'If you don't beat the child, nothing good would come out of him', 'The stick is for the disobedient', 'Those who do not feel, the stick would make them feel'. On the other hand, there are other sayings such as 'The stick makes the boy dumb'. 'The threat would have no effect on those who do not obey spontaneously', It is considered, however, that childhood is the most appropriate period for punishing and disciplining the child. It is said that the child during this time is like the maize plant in its second irrigation (this irrigation is considered to be important for the plant's growth and is preceded by the pulling out of the grass and other weeds). The concentration of punishment at this period is justified on the grounds that the boy or the girl at this stage is neither too young nor too old to learn. The only form of corporal punishment administered to adolescents on some rare occasions is slapping.

However, the administering of punishment by parents to children is checked from being unduly excessive by other relatives, neighbours or other adults who happen to be present. Mediation (literally separation—'hajazat') as institutionalized in the 'Arab council' is an important force
in the legal and social functioning of the community.[1] It is practised by [857]
children themselves and even mock fights are sometimes played by them
to enjoy the wranglings of conciliation similar to those amongst the adults.
Some children told me that on seeing their parents quarrelling, they im- [578]
mediately go out of the house to invite one of their close relatives for mediation. Adults are also expected to stop children's fights if they happen to be passing by, and even punish the disputants.[2]

It is appropriate here to evaluate the period of childhood in Silwa, in comparison with their period of infancy. With the exception of observing sex and religious norms, childhood in Silwa is the period through which a boy or a girl experiences a great number of the pressures of socialization. Some modern anthropologists have pointed out the importance of discontinuities or inconsistencies in child-rearing practices as relevant cultural data especially in connection with personality organization.[3] Esther Goldfrank, for instance, postulates four categories of societies with regard to

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[1] See Chapter II.

[2] See Appendix X, 'Story Completion'.

[3] Ruth Benedict, 'Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning', in *Personality in Nature, Society and Culture*, ed. by Kluckhohn and Murray, p. 414.

861 the continuity or discontinuity of disciplinary policy between infancy and childhood:

(1) Societies where infant and later disciplines are weak.
(2) Societies where infant and later disciplines are severe.
(3) Societies where infant disciplines are severe and later disciplines are weak.
(4) Societies where infant disciplines are weak, and later disciplines are severe.

Goldfrank continues to say: 'From the standpoint of logic these categories pose no problems. However, difficulties may arise when an attempt is made to assign specific societies to any one of them, for permissiveness and pressure are present at all stages of development.'[1] The writer feels that the child-rearing practices compared with infant practices could be classified, without much debate or appearance of subjectivity, into the fourth category of societies where infant disciplines are weak, permissive, and protective, while the later disciplines are prompt, strict, and on the whole, severe.

It has been shown in Chapter IV on infancy how the angelic children are treated permissively and with very few controls until they start to respond orally to the external world. Perhaps the only forbidden fruit in the mother's paradise for the child is the biting of her breast while he is suckling, which normally results in her withdrawal of the breast from him, and might be accompanied by some angry words or a push. On the other hand, we have noticed how the period of childhood is seized upon to discipline the child, and make him conform as well as know his position in the adult world.

155 In this connection, a question of a psychological nature could be asked. How does the child bridge the gap or adjust himself between the early permissive training and the stern childhood discipline without a complete disintegration of his personality? In answer to such a question, certain points must be remembered. The child receives the pressures of socialization, and forgoes his mother's blessings at a stage when he is capable of using his newly-developed interest, such as walking and talking, in his contacts with other children. The social arrangement of the extended family could be also considered as a factor in making up for the mother's deprivation. The rough and aggressive games are an outlet for the strain of socialization during childhood. The gap is also bridged through the integration of the child into the work of the adults. From the economic point of view, the child is continuously conditioned to participate in farm work as a responsible member. Through work in the fields, which is meaningful for the child and indispensable to his family, the child is incorporated in the family circle, and is recognized as a valuable member in it,

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[1] Esther S. Goldfrank, 'Socialization, Personality and the Structure of the Pueblo Society', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLVII, 1945, p. 517.

and this contributes in no small way to the satisfaction of the individual's psychological need for social recognition.[1] These are some of the forces the writer regards as maintaining some sort of healthy effect in the growing up of children in Silwa; otherwise the strain of childhood would have been unbearable in a predominantly authoritarian community where the child is regarded as its father's possession. Erich Fromm would consider such a community as thwarting the child's legitimate strivings for freedom, independence, and self-fulfilment. He maintains that the social arrangement of an authoritarian patriarchal society, frustrating man's wishes to self-realization, tends to create in him a destructive passion, which in turn must be suppressed by external or internal force.[2]

If one thinks of the disciplinary policies of childhood in terms of a straight line, at one end of which is the easy-going discipline of some primitive societies, and at the other end the harsh discipline of a society like the Japanese, it is apparent that the type of discipline to be found in Silwa is closer to that of the Japanese society than to that of those primitive societies. [171]

858 The period of childhood is considered by the adult as an unimportant stage which should be quickly passed over. The writer seldom noticed grown-ups talking about their childhood, and his informants found it very difficult, even unbecoming, to recall their childhood days. The villagers' attitude towards children is indeed a mixed one, regarding them both as supernumerary entities as well as a sub-adult. A child is an economic asset as well as a social nuisance. It was shown in Chapter I how the child is continuously expected to take over from the adult the tasks which it is capable of performing as a part of its acquisition of discipline—'adab'. On the level of social action, however, it is supposed to be insignificant and to have no opinion of its own. On the whole, a son or a daughter, whether young or old, cannot replace the parent in performing formal social obligations; for example, taking gifts to circumcision and wedding ceremonies or entertaining a guest, unless there are extenuating circumstances which justify it. The child's world is always connected with the female world rather than the grown-up male world. In the ceremonial celebrations, children are usually mixed with women more than with men. If children happened to be in a male gathering, they must keep to their place, and be able to withdraw at the earliest opportunity to play on their own, or to join the female crowd. At this level of social action, the unity of the social sphere between children and grown-ups tends to break. Although the child's life is directed towards aims, responsibilities, and values similar

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[1] C. M. Fleming, *Adolescence*, pp. 47–8. See also Abram Kardiner in *The Individual and His Society*, where he emphasizes the emotional meaning of work: 'There is, first, the intrinsic gratification in work as a form of mastery. This must be credited with being a basic gratification. The satisfactions derived from it are common to all forms of mastery. They give the individual a feeling of effectiveness and control' (p. 30).

[2] Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*, pp. 133–8.

858 to those of the adults, he is debarred from adult circles, and adult activities; and grown-ups do not expect their children to express any opinion on matters which are outside their domain. Although they are expected to orientate themselves to the same sphere of life, children are not given any significant role in the social life of the village, apart from their economic role. Until the age of twelve the children are not expected to [099] go to the mosque to say their prayers, and if they go they are allowed to sit in the back row only, and never in the front or the middle. Women and girls, however, do not go to the mosque at all in Silwa, and are not expected to do so. There is no religious sanction for this, however; Islam has enjoined mosque prayers on both sexes. Compared with the Tale child, the social sphere of the Silwa child is more restricted in many respects. In the former society, the social sphere of adults and children is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. 'Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children, or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system.'[1] In Silwa, however, although children may know about the happenings and events of the adult world in the social sphere, they are not expected to take an active part, or to show interest in them, unless they are asked to do so. On some occasions the writer heard children who, on enquiring about the guests coming to the house, or the nature of the gifts taken to relatives, or where father was going, were silenced and asked to 'mind their own business'.

828 Moreover, the process of 'growing-up' is believed to be affected by the character traits of the parents and close relatives on both the patrilineal and matrilineal side.[2] The belief is that the virtues and vices of the parents and their family line are transmitted, through heredity, to their offspring. Especially in the case of outstanding physical features or social characteristics, their presence is invariably accounted for by inheritance from ancestors; if not directly inherited from the parents, they could be traced to the grandfather or to the great-grandfather. Trends of character, whether of meanness, hospitality, piety, wickedness, aggression or docility, seem to run in the families. A person who deviates from what is known about his family is referred to as 'a mistake' or 'a slip', whether in praise or blame depending on the context. One hears sayings and phrases to the effect that 'so-and-so by nature is good or bad'; 'his roots are rotten'; 'nature prevails over nurture (attaba yaghlib attatbu)'; 'people are of different metals; those who were good in the pre-Islamic period, will be equally good in Islam (annas maadin), Khiyaruhum fi al-Jahiliya, khiyaruhum fi al-Islam'.

861 It must be pointed out here that the process of socialization which is strongly felt during childhood and adolescence is not only conducted through the agency of the family, both conjugal and extended, but also

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[1] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 9.

[2] See Chapter IV, concerning the child's character traits.

through age and sex groups. The family does not directly play as great 861
a part in the educative process in Silwa as in towns or cities of Egypt. An
equally if not more important part is played by other children, adults
other than the parents, play-groups, gossip gatherings, groups of girls
going to fill their jars, or groups of boys fetching fertilizer, situations of
hand-washing, tea-serving, ceremonies and celebrations, and by hundreds
of other life situations which go to communicate the heritage of the village
life to the growing child. In Silwa, like the Midwestern Highlands of [171]
Guatemala, 'the heritage of the group is communicated in situations much
less clearly defined than institutions . . . (through) that multitude of daily
situations in which by word or gesture, some part of the tradition is communicated
from one individual to another'.[1] The literary and written 771
aspects of the village Islamic culture are left to a few literary people who
teach or recite the Holy Book and enlighten the other villagers on religious [792]
matters; while theoretical religious knowledge is the concern of a few, all
are concerned with the ritual aspects of religion such as prayers and
fasting.

Moreover, the slow rate of social change in the village has hardly affected 861
the aims and methods of socialization. Children are reared approximately in the same way as their parents and are expected to imbibe the same cultural assumptions, and follow the same path. A qualification must be added here. Growing up in a folk homogeneous society does not necessarily mean a smooth, painless or unhampered process. But however traumatic or frustrating the life experience is, it can nevertheless be presented to each growing individual as viable, and to that extent, bearable.[2] Intensive case studies would certainly reveal the various problems of social adjustment, and show the compensatory mechanisms of those who fail to measure up to the ritual assumptions and requirements.

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[1] Robert Redfield, 'Culture and Education in the Midwestern Highlands of Guatemala', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVIII, 1943, p. 644.

[2] Margaret Mead, 'The Implications of Culture Change for Personality Development', in *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Vol. XVII, 1947, p. 633.

Chapter Seven

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S PLAY AND GAMES

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524 Childhood is usually equated with play, and in Silwa it is the only period in which play and games are tolerated. Organized games form the major part of children's play life in Silwa. On very few occasions children engage in constructive or imaginative play by making animals, in the case of boys, or pots and jars in the case of girls, or by constructing a whirlwind toy out of paper and a palm-tree branch. Tin lids attached to a long palm-tree stick are sometimes used as wheeled instruments of play.

[526] A child of about eight or nine years spends an average of an hour a day playing games, decreasing gradually as he grows older. Certain games are favourite in winter because of the physical exertion required helping to provide warmth, while others are more favoured in summer. In our following description of games, examples of the former are Nos. 2, 20, 21, 22, which are exclusively winter games, while Nos. 15, 16, 17 are preferred in summer, being sedentary, but could also be played in winter after playing a strenuous game. Some games by their nature are exclusively night games, such as Nos. 10, 11 and 12, especially on moonlit nights.

There are no fixed times, however, for play, as children can engage in play whenever they gather in a sufficient number for a game. Sometimes one or two children are seen knocking at the doors of friends, calling upon them to join in a game. Here one sees the expression of reciprocity among children. On many occasions I heard a child blaming another for not coming to join him in play and saying, 'Don't you remember, I played with you the other time you asked me. If you don't come with me now, I won't play with you the next time.'

Immediately a group of children have gathered outside their houses they usually start playing a game. It was observed that most of the younger children or older children accompanying the toddlers would play outside their houses, while unaccompanied older children prefer to play in the recognized 'open spaces' at the edge of the village or where there is wide space between the houses.

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A descriptive account of play situations and games will be given, starting with the play of young children and followed by that of the older. 857* 524

Young children, from three to five years, are often taken outside the house by their older brothers and sisters (more often by their sisters) who are expected to look after them. They spend most of their time watching the older children playing, and they tend to ape their movements. One often sees a three-year-old, for instance, jumping about, running from one wall to another, or throwing its hands and feet about in movements similar to those of its elders. They can also be heard trying to reproduce the words and cries uttered by the others during the course of their play. Boys from four to six take great delight in playing the engine game. They line up in one row holding each other by the back. As they go forward with quick pace, they start puffing and whistling and trying to hit those who are in their way. One also sees boys of four and five standing in a row playing the game of 'Who urinates furthest?', or urinating on the sand and watching their urine as it makes a stream of water.[1] This is usually played in the absence of any adult spectators.

This age group accompanied by their older sisters takes great interest in any flight of birds, especially in the case of 'Wad el sheikh'—Ibis—which [825) is supposed to be the fellah's friend, for it eats the worms which harm the soil and the crop. On seeing the birds overhead, the young children will twirl round and round, while their sisters clap their hands or drum rhythmically on pieces of tin. They sing together: 'Oh son of Sheikh. Give me a little loaf. Or I shall tell uncle Omara, who will beat his drum.' The children in their little song are actually asking the birds for help, threatening them, in case of failure, to tell uncle to scare them off.

All the organized games from the age of six are entirely for either boys or girls, for mixing between the two sexes never occurs in such games. In spite of the fact that certain games are preferred by younger boys, while others are played more by older boys, there is always that mingling of children of this age group (six to twelve) to a varying degree. For instance, there would be one or two older boys taking the leading part in a game mostly played by young boys.

1. One of the games which is mainly played by boys between five and eight is called 'The game of the mouse' (Li'abat al-far). A group of boys builds a heap of sand or dust around which they sit. The oldest boy is the leader and remains in control throughout the game. He calls out 'The mouse has entered', at the same time inserting his index finger into the heap, and the others immediately do likewise. When he calls out 'The mouse has come out' everyone must withdraw his finger. Any delay in responding to the leader's instructions exposes the child to hits on the body from his playmates till the leader orders them to stop.

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[1] See Margaret Lowenfeld, *Play in Childhood*, London, 1935, pp. 114–23, for children's play connected with the experience of urination and defaecation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S PLAY AND GAMES

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2. Another game for the same age group is called 'Shalal-balal'.[1] This is played with two equal teams of three to five members each, each team having a prefect, 'arif', who is usually the eldest boy. The prefects stand beside each other at what may be called a base, whilst the two teams stand intermingled at a distance from them. The prefects take turns in throwing up or away in any direction a small object, usually a bone. This 'bone of contention' must be retrieved by one of the players and returned to his team-prefect at the base. The game involves brute strength as well as cunning, for if any boy can obtain the bone surreptitiously amid the general scramble, he must cunningly shake off suspicion and rapidly reach his prefect. Otherwise the scramble continues, and the bone is fought out with struggle and chase. The winner's side calls out 'Fikum Humar', which scoffingly means 'That's a donkey for you'.

3. Another game of mixed ages is called 'The Buffalo's little horn' (Kurain al gamoosee). A younger boy is slung over the shoulders of an older boy so that his trunk hangs down freely behind the latter, while his knees flex over each shoulder and his legs are crossed over the chest of the older boy. The feet are held rigidly by the older boy to perform a butting and buffeting movement representing the little horns of the bu[illegible]hree or four couples are so made up. The struggle begins amidst challenging shouting of 'the buffalo's little horn' usually between two parties, the object being to dislodge the crossed legs and so cause 'the buffalo' to slip down. The 'horns' are thus destroyed and the two players so dealt with drop out of the game. The remaining couple resumes its attack on other survivors and so on until one couple is left as victor.

4. A similar game played by mixed ages is called 'Donkey's ride' (Rokoub Hamir). In this case a younger boy straddles the shoulders of an older boy, who holds the rider's dangling legs securely with his hands. The object of this game is to unseat the opponent by dragging or pulling him off his mount. This, however, rarely occurs, as the struggle between the riders usually takes the form of buffeting, pulling and pushing. Actual striking or slapping is not allowed. Although the younger boys seem to be the more active participants in the game yet the older boys can naturally assist in the struggle by manœuvring their positions to help their riders.

5. 'The water-carrier fight' (Harb al Sakka) is so called because the older boys carry the smaller boys slung across the small of their backs, grasping them firmly to themselves, similar to the way in which the water-skin is slung behind the water-vendor. The protruding legs are free to kick and to hit the opponents' free legs. The aim here, as before, is to dislodge 'the water-skin' from the back of 'the water-carrier'.

6. The combination of old and young boys also takes the form of a race. The older boy stands putting his arms behind his back, clasping his hands together, while the smaller boy stands with his feet on the former's hands. A line of these couples race towards the goal shouting out: 'This is the tall

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[1] The two words have no apparent meaning and they are put together just to rhyme.

palm tree that extends from here to the island' (Al nakhla attawili, min hina lil jaziri). 857* 526

7. One of their favourite games is for two boys to stand side by side linking the near hands, and for a third boy to crook a leg over the joined arms and place his hand on the near shoulder of each of the other two boys. As they advance at walking pace, he hops on his one leg, then sings 'The lame cock jumps over the hen' (Arag arroug, nat al faroug), as they quicken their pace. Races can be run in this way, having teams of three.

From the age of nine and ten till thirteen and fourteen years boys play more complicated games which are, on the whole, tougher and require more muscular skill, lasting longer.

8. For instance, a boy stands facing a wall, leaning forward with his palms flat to support him, his legs apart. Another stands behind him grasping him round the waist, another stands behind this latter grasping him similarly, and so forth for as many as are playing. The last one, however, is the active player in the game. His task is to detach each member, one by one, from the chain. This he must do by grasping the last member by both legs and pulling him how he will until he has detached the person in question, dragging him away to a base. Then he returns to tackle the next victim and so on. When he has finished this, another member is dragged till the chain, thus disconnected, is reformed to start again.

9. The game of 'Drag him, bring him along' is an interesting game for this age group. The boys are divided into two teams of equal numbers, and face each other on either side of a line drawn on the ground. Each boy grasps his opposite number by the right hand, across the line. The aim is to pull the opponent over the line of demarcation towards one's own side. Directly one member has done this, two boys, one from each side, are chosen to spit on the sand, and the loser, bending over with his hands on the ground, is slapped on the buttocks by all members of the other side. This continues until the two boys declare that the spit has gone dry. If, however, the victim wishes to curtail his punishment he must say 'I am a woman', whereupon the beating ceases, and the teams line up again and resume the struggle. A confession of 'womanhood' by a boy of one side is a point scored for the other.

10. There are also various versions of hide-and-seek. The well-known type is where one hides and the rest search him out while singing in chorus:

At-talab fat fat
   The fox passed, passed
wif-dailo saba laffat
   and in his tail there are seven knots. [533]

A variation of this is called 'Policemen and thieves' with two teams, where each member of one team (the constables) must search out his opposite number in the other team (the thieves). Having found him, the searcher

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must bring him to the base, often a task which entails struggle and strategy. After all the thieves have been rounded up, the teams change places, and the game goes on.

11. On moonlit nights the following game called 'Who jumped over thee, O little pot?' (Meennattak y kwaidees) is played with great zest. Two boys are chosen by turns, one to bend over on to all fours placing his head between the knees of the other facing him. The former's eyes are covered by the latter's hands, so that he cannot see. The other boys jump in turn over the crouching boy, who at each jump is asked by his partner by saying 'Who jumped over thee, O little pot?' If he guesses correctly, he can immediately change places with the jumper. If, however, he does not guess any of the names, the boys disperse after secretly informing the partner where they will hide, and the crouching boy must then guess where each one has hidden. A correct guess will merely bring back the boy whose place was correctly guessed from his hiding place, but inability to guess will mean that the hiding boy must be carried back to base.

12. 'The hidden heaps' (Kwaimat ad-das) is also a game played preferably on a moonlit night, with as many boys as possible joining in, as it is, *par excellence*, a game of the crowd. Two senior boys are chosen as leaders and the other boys pair up. The pairs decide on names beyond the leaders' hearing; one is wheat, the other barley, one is horse, the other donkey, and so on. They return to the leaders who alternately are given two such agreed names to choose from, and thus the two teams are formed. The leaders and their teams then set off in opposite directions, each team agreeing on the limits of an area to be covered. The aim is to make little heaps of sand or earth in out-of-the-way places, so unobtrusive that some effort must be made to discover them. The first team to return begins to make a noise, shouting, howling or calling, so that the other team shall return. Then both teams set off into the other's territory, to destroy as many of the heaps as they can find. On their way they sing:

> Sharrag, gharrab, ya liamoon,
> In the east, in the west, there are lemons,
> Bahhar, ghabbal, ya liamoon.
> In the north, in the south, there are lemons.

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Then at last both teams meet again, and there is a check by each leader of the other team's work. This necessitates visits afterwards to both areas by both teams, and the heaps still left undestroyed on both sides are totalled up, the winning team having a balance of undestroyed heaps in their favour.

13. 'The little rope' (Hibail) is played with two boys seated on the ground facing each other, holding a rope tautly between them. One is called the 'Bridegroom', the other the 'Bride'. The other boys take turns to approach the 'bridegroom' and strike him with a small rope or a turban end. Then, and not before, the 'bridegroom' drops his rope and makes every

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954

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attempt to catch the boy before the latter reaches a base. If he cannot catch the boy, but secures the striking rope, he returns and places this in front of the 'bride'. The striker cannot be 'home' without his rope and therefore must retrieve this. The 'bridegroom' may not attempt to catch the striker until the latter has touched his striking rope. It is a matter of quickness of eye, and running ability. If the 'bridegroom' catches the striker this time, the latter must take his place. If he does not and the striker reaches 'home' with his striking rope, the 'bridegroom' must reseat himself and the next boy then must advance to strike. 857* 526

14. Another game using a short-length rope is played by a group of boys. All of them stand some distance from a base, and one of their number throws the rope up into the air. Then all the boys scramble to catch hold of it as it falls and the lucky one then turns on the rest to strike whom he can while they are running back to base.

15. A game which involves no physical exertion is called 'Seega with Tab'. The tab is the instrument of scoring, and is made of a palm-tree branch (frond). It is cut a 'span' in length and a 'thumb' wide, one side being green, the other white. Four of these sticks are used in scoring. For playing, two of these sticks are held in each hand, the hands unite to shuffle them, and one hand strikes the sticks on to the other hand to fall on the ground. The scoring depends either on the number of the white sides turned up, one, two, three or four (called an egg), or on all the green sides up, which counts as six. A one must be thrown before scoring can begin, i.e. in the boys' phrase 'One must bring a boy' (a walad). On throwing an opening one the player usually shouts 'This is the boy that thrilled the village' (Walad kharab al balad). In subsequent throws a one allows an extra throw, as also does a four and a six. 857* 524

With the 'tab' a 'seega', a kind of Ludo, is played by making little holes in the ground in four rows of between usually six to ten holes in a row. These holes are called 'eyes' (Oyun). In each eye of the two outermost rows is placed a piece of stone (called dog), say sandstone for one row, and bits of pottery in the other, to distinguish the dogs of each player. One person or more can play on each side. The scoring is with the tab as already outlined. The main object is to 'eat' the opponent's dog according to the moves of the tab. The dogs can be moved only after scoring a one, they then become 'Moslems' after being 'Christians', and thereupon are called 'brothers' instead of dogs. They move along the inner row on the side nearest their home (dar) and then along the inner row on the opposite side, till it secures a place in the opponent's home. The whole crux of the game depends on a piece or pieces in a hole being moved along to a hole occupied by the opponent's piece or pieces; all these latter are thus 'eaten' and are removed from the game. Thus the one who manages to 'eat up' all his opponent's pieces first is the winner.

16. Another game scored by the 'tab' sticks is called 'The rule of the whip' (Hukm Kurbag). At least five boys are required to play this game

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properly. These things are necessary for the game: a palm-tree branch (used as a cane), a ring of rope and a very small stick. The player cannot participate in the benefits of the game until he scores a one and the person is thus 'sweetened'. Further scores are: six for a 'Sultan' who holds the ring of rope, four for a 'Minister' (vizir) who holds the cane, and three ones for the small stick.[1] Directly a Sultan and a Minister are scored, the former can command the latter to beat any 'unsweetened' boy with the cane (usually from one to ten strikes on the soles of the feet). The small stick, when it is scored, is the 'stick of mercy' and the holder can lessen any of the Sultan's penalties. As the game continues, the different symbols of command, execution and mercy change hands according to the tab scorings and thus give ample chance for retaliation, conspiracy and altercation.

17. The third game in which scoring is by 'tab' is called 'Burial' (Dafn). It is a simple game for which the participants sit in a circle. Whoever first scores three ones—sometimes the rule is consecutively, at other times cumulatively—buries the tab sticks in the ground. The player who preceded the winner must then attempt to get the sticks out by using his chin to remove the soil and his teeth to extract the sticks. This takes place amidst the jeers and words of humiliation from the whole of the group.

18. Another type of Seega is played without 'tab' scoring, where a square of five rows of five holes (Khimasiyah), or seven rows of seven holes (Sibaiyah) is made on the ground. Each player, in the case of 'Khimasiyah', has twelve 'dogs', each dozen of different material—crockery bits, stone or dried pellets of camel-dung. The players agree on who shall 'throw' first. The first player puts two of his pieces in any two of the holes except the centre hole into which no piece may be put at this stage. The other player follows by putting two of his pieces where he will. In this way both players place their pieces in all the twenty-four holes, and the centre hole is left for the first move, which is played by the last person who placed his pieces. He moves any one of his pieces adjacent to the centre hole, into the centre hole, and his opponent follows by moving any of his pieces adjacent to the vacated hole, into it. The aim is to get pieces in holes immediately adjacent either side of the opponent's piece, whereupon the surrounded piece is 'eaten' and thrown out of play. The winner is the one who is left with three pieces to the opponent's one.

For example, if player 'A' move his (o) dog to the centre hole (as indicated by the lined arrow) he would be able to 'eat' the 1 and 2 (x)s. Player 'B' would then move his dog to the vacated hole (as shown by the dotted arrow) and could eat 3, 4 and 5 (o)s, as he is allowed to return to his former position if he could 'eat' by such a move.

One of the significant features about 'Seega' is that, though it is an individual game, it is usually, whether played by boys or adults, an attraction for a gathering, everybody giving his advice as to the best move. This

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[1] A residue of the Ottoman rule in Egypt seems to reflect itself in this game.

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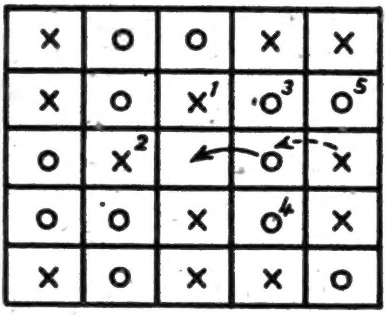
is accepted by the players as part of the enjoyment of the game, for it is held that the 'seega' is not chaste.



X	O	O	X	X
X	O	X1	O3	O5
O	X2		O	X
O	O	X	O4	X
X	O	X	X	O

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19. One rarely passes the village during the day without seeing boys playing the game of 'Awal-Hawal' ('Awal' means first, and 'hawal' means change, though here it is probably a rhyming addition). The game is also called 'First faeces'. There are teams playing with a ball, called 'Jalloud', usually improvised with pieces of old cloth, though sometimes of rubber, and a striking post, which is a piece of stone set up on the ground. One team 'fields' whilst the other team have their 'innings', one at a time. The boy who is 'in' stands with his back to the fielders, and faces the striking post. He throws up the ball and on its descent hits it back behind him. This first hit is called 'Awal' (one). If any of the fielders catch it, the player is out. Otherwise, whoever retrieves it is allowed to aim at the striking post, from where he found the ball. If he strikes the post, the player is out, and another member of his team takes over. If the fielder fails to hit the post, then the player strikes the ball again, saying 'Tani' (second), and so on, if he can, to the third striking called 'Abu' (father). If he succeeds in not being caught out, or the retriever has not hit the post, then he turns his face to the fielders and strikes the ball towards them with his hand. If he succeeds three times in this way in remaining 'in', he kicks the ball towards the fielders—he is allowed three kicks in all, provided he remains 'in'. There are nine possible strikings of the ball by the players who are 'in' to score 'a donkey', or another three added if they want to have 'a donkey ride' on their opponents. In the case of the latter, the two captains do not take part in 'the donkey riding' and play by themselves. The 'ride' of the winning team lasts for as long as their captain is not 'out'. Directly the captain is 'out' the two teams change places. One of the most important rules in this game is the strict observance of the order of striking the ball, and to make a mistake in calling out the sequence is to be declared 'out' by the other team saying 'You are jumped over' (Hub alaik).

20. 'Shattat Battat' is a very similar game to 'Awal-Hawal'. It is played

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with two sticks, one a yard, the other six inches, in length. The teams pair up, one having innings, the other fielding. A hole is dug in the ground and the smaller stick is laid across the hole. The first player strikes this smaller stick into the air by lifting it smartly with the longer stick. If the stick is not caught, whereupon the player is out, the fielder aims it at the hole where it must either hit the stick or fall into the hole, and the player is then out. Assuming that there is no catch or successful aim, the player then proceeds to build a small heap of earth on which he places the little stick sloping with the upper end free. He then strikes this upper end down, the stick flies up and he strikes it again as hard as possible. It is now a question of catching, otherwise wherever the stick falls, another heap is made and the little stick is struck again for as many as twelve times in all. If no catch has been made, the losing team must carry the winners, with the exception of the leaders who walk back to the base.

21. 'Shad' is also another absorbing game for the boys, especially the adolescents.[1] It requires a large open space, and consists of two teams made up by pairing with the usual procedure. The boys usually strip to the waist, keeping only their pants with turban strips tied round the waist. The two teams face each other in a row, each boy holding his right foot up behind him with his left hand. In their initial struggle the team that is 'in', 'hides' a member, who plays the 'bride', and he does not begin to play until later. The teams advance on each other, hopping along, the aim being to jostle, push, shove, pull, using only the flexed knee and the free hand, although charging is included. In this free fight the object is to knock over the opponent, who is 'out' if he lets his foot slip from his hand or falls on the ground. If the 'bride's' team is left with one or more against an empty field, then the 'bride is safe', and the game is won. If a few of the opposing team, or even one, survive, having vanquished all the 'bride's' team, the 'bride' then has to face those opponents, her job being to hop off to a goal without actually being engaged in any fight with the opposing hoppers. As dodging, speed, and nimbleness are required from the 'bride', it is usually the fastest player who is selected as 'bride'. If the 'bride' reaches 'home' safely—that side has won; if she is unsuccessful, the other side changes place, and chooses its own 'bride' to resume the game.

22. Another hopping game, this time without teams, is played by three boys at least. Two boys sit facing each other, their legs extended so that their feet touch each other, their legs forming a diamond shape. The third boy holds his right leg behind with his hand as in the 'Shad' game. Then follows a series of hopping feats of ever-increasing difficulty, where the two boys make him hop over them higher and wider at every turn. In hopping he must not touch any part of them with his foot or leg. The penalty is that he lies prone between their legs and is squeezed. From this the game has derived its name 'To be squeezed' (Kammatat). To release himself the victim must confess 'he is a woman' or say that 'he is in God's

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[1] 'Shad' means 'Tighten yourself'.

shelter' (a woman's phrase). Otherwise he has to push up the legs of his 'squeezers' and thus by loosening them he can escape. 857* 524

23. A form of wrestling is indulged in by boys to test each others' strength, or settle an argument. The boys embrace each other, one arm passing round the shoulder; thus, both have an equal hold. The aim is to throw the opponent on his back. Arms in the holding position are only to be used to exert pressure, and legs can be used to trip the opponent to fall on his back. The winner declares his victory by announcing that 'he has brought so-and-so's back to the ground'. This struggle is sometimes the result of a climax in argument and threats, when one challenges the other to 'come outside' for a 'Sirai', so that they can struggle without interference from others.

These are practically all the games played by the boys, and now the girls' games will be described. A typical game for girls is called 'Tugul' (weights), which is similar to 'fivestones' played in Europe, except that in this case 'marbles' are used instead of cubes. The preparation of these little balls entails a good deal of work in shaping and smoothing pieces of sandstone, and sometimes pottery, to about half an inch in diameter. The game is usually an individual game played normally by two girls. The first play is to grasp the five 'marbles' (ten in the case of older girls) in the hand and throw them up in such a way as to intercept their fall on the ground with the back of the hand—the purpose being to scatter the marbles haphazardly. The second play is to throw up one marble, and grasp a second, catching the first as it falls. The caught 'marble' is then put aside and the remaining marbles are to be grasped in the same way during the throwing up of the first marble. The third stage is exactly the same except that two marbles must be picked up at each throw; the fourth stage entails grasping three and then one, at each throw. The final stage is to place the marbles on the back of the hand, to throw them up and grasp them all, while they fall. If at any stage the marble is not grasped, or the thrown one is not caught, or, if in the final stage all the marbles are not caught, the girl loses her turn to the other. When picking a marble, no other marble must be touched. 857* 524

The game therefore requires a degree of skill and co-ordination, e.g. in the choice of marble to pick up, and in the arrangement of marbles on the back of the hand. It is a game at which girls of ten spend hours, and is enjoyed by both young and older girls. After the game is finished the girls usually dig a hole in the ground to keep their marbles for further play.

The second game is a girls' version of the 'Seega' played by boys, of four rows of four holes, and is played by four girls, two on each side. The two rows nearest each team are their 'home' rows. Two girls sit opposite the other two and one side starts. The girl on the left places her left hand behind her back and grasps the left hand of her partner, who is seated on her right. Thus both girls have their right hands free. The first girl sings a ditty, punctuating the words by putting her index finger in each hole.

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*857 524 The ditty goes on like this: 'Boos, Boos, daughter of Hussain the afflicted, has filled my thoughts at midday (when the sun is hottest). May God fill her thoughts.' The idea is to squeeze a finger of the hand held behind her back while pointing to a particular hole. Thus the two playing girls choose a hole without the other side knowing which one it is. Then the girl whose finger was squeezed hides herself behind the back of her partner, merely by leaning over sideways. The opposite team has three guesses as to the hole chosen. If they guess correctly the turn passes to them. If they do not guess correctly the girl who was hiding reappears to confirm that by showing them the correct hole. The idea of her being separated from her partner is to prevent collusion. In this case, one girl from the successful side spits into one of the 'home' rows of her opponents. The hole is then closed by throwing in some earth. The aim of the game is to close all the holes of the opponents' rows. The first side to do this has won.

*857 A very popular play situation with girls is the representation of some of the adult female occupations and ceremonies. This would involve making straw figures, bedecked in bits of cloth as men or women and children, and with the help of stones, building a house.[1] All the details of an event or ritual are played out in a make-believe way. Thus marriage, circumcision, cooking, and social meetings are all imitated.

524 526 The adult world is almost entirely deprived of organized games. Men play the 'Seega' (No. 19)* only, and on ceremonial occasions 'Hatab', which is a form of fencing played by two persons, each holding a thick stave (nabbout) of about six or seven feet long, each player trying to strike the other on his body. Women have no organized games of any sort, not even those played by the girls.

*857 517 In a sociological analysis of play situations and games it is appropriate to refer to the attitude of adults towards play. The notion of a 'dignified man' as a social ideal, contrasts with that of a man who plays. This reflects the marked dichotomy between the adult world which is considered to be serious, busy and involved in social happenings, and the children's world which, being considered transitory, uneconomic, and even frivolous, is in most cases despised by the sober adults. To describe a grown-up's action as 'childish play' is to condemn it, and such a phrase is highly offensive and might lead to bitter altercation, even blows.

Thus one can hardly find any adult who shows any interest, much less enthusiasm, in children's play and games. Indeed, it would be unbecoming in an adult. If a group of men happens to gather near some children playing, the children immediately realize the situation and have to withdraw somewhere else; otherwise they will expose themselves to a scolding or a missile directed at them. Whatever adults do, is work, for it is only 517 children who play. Yet this does not mean that they have no leisure; they spend it in exchanging news, gossip, tea and coffee drinking and visiting

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[1] By the time they reach adolescence girls are expected to have made a sufficient number of dolls to be used as a decoration for their marital homes.

*[The author apparently means No. 18, see category 116, pp. 150-151--Analyst]

each other. But they think it below their dignity to play games or 'bounce 517
about'. When the writer told a gathering of villagers about some of the games played by adults in the cities they denounced it as childish and undignified. One of them added in excuse, 'By the end of a day's work we are worn out; we just want to relax and not play'.

Looking at this question from the adult viewpoint, it is not incorrect to 857*
state that growing up in the village is a continuous process of weaning the child from play to the serious activities of 'a dignified man'. In infancy [861]
a child might respond truthfully to the father's question as to whether it had been playing, but as the child grows older, the fear of giving a direct answer increases, and an evasive reply replaces the earlier readiness to tell the truth. An adolescent would definitely deny playing, for fear of [883]
reproval or even punishment. Thus an adolescent who has imbibed 'adab' is one who has outgrown all play in 'open spaces', and has thus severed all links with the most characteristic feature of child-life. On the whole, by the age of sixteen for boys and thirteen for girls, they normally terminate their play life as one of the signs of their maturity.

There is also the religious factor that contributes to the regarding of 783
play as an undesirable activity. This religious motive is mainly due to the 517
effect of the mystic tradition abominating play as an indulgence in pleasure which should be avoided. According to the mystic views, 'a pious man' should devote himself to worship and work; but play is 'lahw'—licentiousness. In the minds of the people the underlying concept of 'lahw' extends itself to other types of entertainment, e.g. the cinema, the theatre, playing or listening to music.[1] While it is true that the younger generation, in some part, go to the cinema whilst visiting the towns, the majority of the older generation regard cinema and theatre-going as 'haram'—something sinful. This 'Puritan' attitude towards play and entertainments, however, has no Koranic support; it is only based on the example of the rugged and restrained life of the 'pious ancestors'.

Looking at the organization of games, the second striking feature, after 857*
the marked dichotomy between the adult's and the child's world, is the almost complete segregation of both sexes, in games, after the age of six or seven at the latest. The sex distinction is so binding that it is unbecoming of a member of one sex to play the games of the other sex. Nevertheless, [526]
the writer has seen a group of girls in one of the back streets play the ball-game 'Awal-hawal'. Yet immediately they noticed a man approaching (not the writer), they all dispersed, only to resume play later. In contrast with the boys, ball-games with the girls are usually restricted to wall bouncing or catching games. There is no single game which is played by both sexes.

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[1] This tradition is very similar to that of the Puritans in England as shown in the following quotation from the early eighteenth century: 'Play must be forbidden in all its forms. The children shall be instructed in this matter in such a way as to show them, through the presentation of religious principles, the wastefulness and folly of all play. They shall be led to see that play will distract their hearts and minds from God . . . and work nothing but harm to their spiritual lives.'

*857 On the other hand, the writer has not seen or heard of boys of over five years old trying to play girls' games. This is partly understandable on grounds of the wide variety of boys' organized games (more than twenty) as compared with the two or three games which are played by girls. Yet the latter cannot escape from the bullying and interference of boys in their play, and thus squabbles occur, whereupon girls shout, defending themselves by saying: 'Are we boys? Go away and play with other boys.' One of the frequent complaints that the village schoolteachers have to deal with is the ever-recurring interference of boys in girls' games.

The sex dichotomy reflects itself also in the difference between boys' and girls' games with regard to their nature, content and penalties. While most of the boys' games are aggressive, requiring exertion and brute strength, the girls' games are of the sedentary type. The difference could be easily explained by the fact that the boys identify themselves with the image of the father who is supposed to be endowed with superior strength as contrasted to the mother who is the girls' model for social behaviour.

In penalty punishment 'donkey-riding', 'scoring a donkey' or confession of 'womanhood' is found in boys' games and does not occur in girls' games. Confession of 'womanhood' (as expressed in games Nos. 8 and 22) should be the last resort for a boy when pain from punishment is no longer bearable, and is almost a means of vindicating manhood. One also notices that, if two teams are playing and one team withdraws from playing when it is the other team's chance to be 'in', the latter jeers at the withdrawing team by shouting: 'You are women, you just want some "henna" in your hands.' The rough and tumble that boys' games involve is considered to be a test for hardihood and endurance.

It is also relevant to mention the different methods by which boys and girls settle their conflicts and misunderstandings during play. While boys [978] strike each other, and use the 'come outside' wrestling to decide their problems, girls usually resort to spitting, pinching, biting and vituperation.

From the viewpoint of content, boys' games hardly represent any aspect or theme of actual male life. In their play, practically no scenes of the farm work or social events are enacted. On the other hand, girls' play reproduces much of the female occupations. A girl might be playing with a small grinder, putting earth or sand into it, or with a piece of pierced tin imitating sieving, or with a crudely constructed distaff for spinning cotton or wool. Viewing it from this point of view, one might say that boys' games are on the whole undirected and socially irrelevant. The social context of girls' games could be considered as a reflection of the keenness to hasten their social maturity, and to quicken its pace compared with that of boys'.

Yet one can also see that boys' games develop their motor skill, balance and co-ordination in such a way as to prepare them for actual life. One sees small boys trying to balance themselves while walking along the trunk of a palm tree lying on the ground. Older boys of six or seven years old climb walls and walk along the top of them. In being able to do so, boys

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become a great asset in house tasks; for instance, as 'fuel fetchers'. Most of the fuel in the form of maize straw, tree branches and manure is stacked on the roof, and boys are expected to help their mothers in bringing down the fuel stores into the house whenever needed.

The third feature that emerges from the children's play in the village is 857* the social significance of age. As mentioned in the description of games, 867 the leaders are invariably chosen on an age-basis. In any game, the older 561 boys are the senior boys, unless joined later by boys who are older still and who are entitled to take over the role of leadership. Age, as the basis of seniority, is recognised by children even at the age of five and six, where the selection of the leaders amongst this age level occasions most of the quarrels which occur. In case of disagreement as to who is the oldest boy, this is sometimes decided by height. If this brings further disagreement, the problem is referred to an older boy, who is expected to know their relative ages. Furthermore, if any boy goes complaining to his mother on any account when playing, the first question she asks him is whether the child who hit him is older than he. If so she stands by her child, otherwise she straight away tells him, 'He is your age. Go and hit him, you coward.' The shaming would be worse if the offender happens to be younger.

It is also worth repeating that the two teams playing are usually balanced by the pairing up of 'equals' (nadid) which actually means 'of the same age' in the children's language. Failing to achieve that, two young boys may be given two or even three turns, if the other team has an older boy to match them. Players are usually reminded by the leaders of how well their opposite number is playing on the other side. Throughout organized or unorganized games, children are always encouraged to face the clash of 'equals' as an important experience in life.

Another important social norm reflected in play procedures is the respect 857* that is shown to the leaders in directing the games, and the power enjoyed 867 by them. They settle the disputes and smooth misunderstandings that occur during the game. They have to stand up to the inevitable latecomer who threatens to break up the game if not admitted. In this respect, it is also worth pointing out that they are seldom involved in the penalties that result from losing. For instance, in most of the games described they do not take part in the humiliating 'donkey-ride' which applies only to their team.

The last feature in our sociological analysis is the place for play. For 857* children of all ages play always takes place outside the dwelling house. When a child [illegible] playing in the house, the normal reaction on the part of the mother [illegible] or any older member of the family is to expel him from the house, as if play, by its nature, should be indulged in beyond the dwelling premises. While such a reaction may be attributed in some measure to the fact that children might break things or create undue disturbance, the substantial reason is that the house is a place for work, and for the carrying out of serious domestic, social, and economic tasks. The notion

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is instilled in the child's mind at a very early stage, not only after it knows how to walk confidently, but even as a toddler, when his older sister or brother carries him outside the home to sit or crawl around while others play.

Ali, my informant, commented that children have less scope and time
[178] for play than they used to. He added: 'The days of children's play have
gone, and nowadays even the suckling has to worry about getting a living.
Since the introduction of perennial irrigation the people have cultivated
[841] the land "from the sea to the mountain". Yet they have no "baraka"
(blessedness); they have become more greedy and less godly.'[1] The relation between perennial irrigation and the diminishing periods of children's play did not strike the writer as a plausible explanation at first. After further enquiry, however, the real significance became clearer. In the days of 'basin irrigation', with the exception of attending to the water-wheel, most of the irrigation work was done by the grown-ups, as the water was more difficult to obtain and therefore more valuable. At present, actual irrigation of land is mainly the boys' task, as besides the abundance of water, it does not involve more than removing the 'lid' from the opening (siyala) between the canal and the field. Moreover, during basin irrigation very much less manure was needed to fertilize even the same size of land tenure, which meant more time for children's play.

[524] The influence of urban life has reflected itself in some of the sedentary
games of the adults. On the market day especially, villagers who frequent
[369] the town or have worked there, can be seen playing a kind of 'draughts'
(dumnah), or kind of 'trictrac' (tawlah) or cards. Because this type of play
depends on 'chance' it does not win social approval, as all 'hazardous'
[525] play is 'Kumar' (betting) which is religiously forbidden. On the other
hand, children's play has not felt the impact of urban influences and one
cannot find even manufactured dolls in the hands of children.

In the sociological analysis, the emphasis has been chiefly on the part that child play performs in the formation or expression of social attitudes, habits and skills and the ways of acquiring what is in Malinowski's phrase 'the basic grammar of the culture pattern'. Although for certain purposes the social and the psychological approaches can be separated, it is essential in the treatment of play situations to apply both. While one must examine the reflection of social norms in play, one must also consider the manipulation of the psychological forces, e.g. giving vent to aggression or the importance of parent-child relationship, in the process of growing-up as expressed in children's play. With the full realization that neither the social-cognitive, nor the psychological-symbolic significance, is by itself the real meaning of play, the latter aspect will now be discussed.

There are various theories that purport to explain play. Here we are not concerned with identifying ourselves with any of those theories advanced by Herbert Spencer, Stanley Hall, Karl Groos, or Sigmund Freud.

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[1] Such a statement contains the elements of cynicism and puritanism which sometimes colour Ali's information.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S PLAY AND GAMES

We, however, made no detailed observations of play situations, and 857* therefore cannot attempt to elaborate any particular theory about the psychological functions of play which cannot be pressed into any single formula.[1] Some of these theories will be woven into our argument to clarify certain points.

This is a plausible approach, since we are not mainly concerned with play in generic terms, but in its special relevance to a functional study. From our limited observations and the nature and procedures of games the following three conclusions emerge: boys' play is characterized by an enormous amount of toughness and roughness, bodily contacts, representing almost a challenge to the 'serious' adult world as evidenced in grown-ups driving away playing children from their surroundings;[2] secondly, one is struck by the degree of sexuality either in the use of obscene language in connection with games or in the phallic symbols in the games; thirdly, there is a relatively meagre social content, especially in the boys' games.

The element of sexuality about many of the games described could be viewed by psycho-analysts as an expression of the 'abreaction' function of 857* play, through which the children grow out of the attitudes connected with the Oedipus situation (passive stage) into those of the mature adult 154 (active stage). In other words, they are representations of the transition from mother attachment to the love-object. With little secondary elaboration of sexual themes in children's games in Silwa, one could find a strong confirmation of the 'abreaction theory of play', especially to what Roheim calls 'the separation type' of games (see games Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 8). In such games Roheim maintains that the child's separation from the mother is enacted in a group of symptomatic actions such as cleaving, pinching, binding and loosening; and in this way the child builds up defences against the mother's loss and castration anxiety.[3]

In another place Roheim maintains that the stage of latency (between five and ten) is also that of play in the child's growth, and the abundance of complicated elaboration of games in any society may be regarded as an index showing the depth and strength of this repression of sexuality at this stage. 'Varied and complicated games show that great quantities of genital libido are being diverted into other channels, i.e. sublimated.'

Taking such leads into consideration, one notices that the boys' games in Silwa are not characterized by any complications or secondary elaborations. In the light of psycho-analytical findings, the period of latency in Silwa as expressed in children's play and games does not witness the

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[1] Margaret Lowenfeld, *Play in Childhood*, London, 1935. In Chapter I, she gives a masterly discussion of the various theories of play.

[2] A certain amount of roughness and aggression is a necessary element in play and games, but the games already described are extremely rough and uncouth, as the writer has attempted to show in the description of them. For the attitude of adults towards children's play, see Appendix IX, 'Moral Ideology Test'.

[3] Géza Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*, p. 11. 'Children's Games and Rhymes in Duau (Normanby Island)', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLV, 1943.

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'latency' or repression of sexuality as reported by psycho-analysts.[1] On the contrary, till the ages of ten and eleven children give full swing to their rough and vulgar ways of talk in their games. Even if the period of latency is universal according to psycho-analysts, its layer of repression amongst Silwa boys during this stage is not more than skin-deep. This contrasts with girls' play where phrases or symbols of sexuality are hardly expressed. The difference is certainly a reflection of the social norms governing sex, and exerts pressure on girls earlier than on boys.

Looking at the play and games of boys in the general cultural context and the trends of process of growing up, their characteristic roughness and sexuality could be regarded as a reflection of the expressive and assertive way of dealing with equals in competitive situations. Moreover, it could also be regarded as the last fling of the children's group before the adult world makes them toe the line in the stage of adolescence. Perhaps in their resentment of the pressures of socialization, the children's group finds a healthy scope for letting off steam in their own play-life unsupervised and undirected by the requirements of their grown-ups. It is relevant to state here that free unorganized play amongst children is mainly characterized either by mimicking other children or ridiculing adults with physical deformities, especially the lame and the blind. In such ways children give vent to their feelings of aggression towards, and resentment of, the adults' world. In this way one can see that the roughness in the boys' games may be regarded as a safety-valve by which the pressures of adult authority are vented and thus relieved.

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It is to be asked to what extent the environment and the cultural conditions of the community determine, or at least predispose, the boys and girls in the village to maintain and appreciate the games they play. It cannot be mere accident that most of the games, especially boys' games, although co-operative within the team, are directed mainly in their execution towards a highly competitive goal. While it cannot be firmly established, there is a strong suggestion that the village's social structure, with the solidarity of family, clan, and division combined with the rivalry between the various families, clans and the two divisions, favours the adoption of such games.

Moreover, it is appropriate to ask to what extent maleness is connected with these boys' games in the sense that through the tough and rugged manner of play, boys gain their manly skill and endurance. In other words, to what extent can one consider these games as ways of testing boys' ability to take their part in the community which requires a demonstration of manhood by showing one's prowess in the games? With this, one also notices the quiet nature of the girls' games which is compatible with the female ethos in this community.

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[1] G. Roheim, 'The Psycho-analysis of Primitive Cultural Types,' in *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, Vol. XIII.

Chapter Eight

CHILDREN'S TALES, THEIR TEXTS, ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

It is important for an understanding of the social and psychological 857*
development of children in Silwa, to examine the tales, fables, and 538
other stories transmitted to them from time immemorial.[1] Before embarking on this, however, a few introductory remarks should be made in connection with folk literature in general in this community. Such literature is relatively meagre in both quantity and quality compared with some other non-literate communities. In Silwa at present there are no myths, indigenous legends, and hardly any economic lore as in some primitive communities, all of which attempt to explain the nature of the universe, the history and origin of the people, or transmit traditional knowledge as applied to the solution of economic problems.[2] There is no doubt that, before the advent of Islam, and of Christianity before that, the Ancient Egyptian myths and folk literature must have been the oral code guiding the beliefs and values of folk people in Ancient Egypt. The survival of these is still evident, in spite of Islamic doctrines, in beliefs and ideas about jinn, invisible counterpart (Karina), saints, sacrifice, the evil eye, and so forth.[3] The changes in religious and social attitudes of the people, through becoming part of the Moslem society, have obscured the previously existing system of oral tradition. Perhaps some of its elements still persist in a modified form in the folk tales and children's stories found at present in rural Egypt.

The adult attitude towards children's stories is very similar to their attitude towards children's games, and there is hardly any adult, especially amongst men, who admit that he tells stories to his children. Stories, as seen through the 'puritanic' eyes of adults, are considered to be demonic, and of no practical value. Story-telling is also included in the concept of dissipated leisure (lahw) which such a stoically religious community does [517]

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[1] G.P. Lestrade, 'Traditional Literature', in *The Bantu Speaking Tribes*, ed. by I. Schapera, London, 1946.

[2] The full text of the stories is given at the end of this chapter.

[3] See E. Westermarck, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, London, 1926.

*857 538 [519] not accept as one of the commendable spheres of indulgence in a pious life.[1] While mothers may occasionally tell their children a story at night, fathers could never be expected to do it, as it might encourage that intimacy and levity towards them which is incompatible with the ideal of paternal respect. Story-hearing and telling is a feature of the child and adolescent groups. The writer has not found literate people in Silwa entertaining the reading of novels in the modern sense, as they are regarded 'unreal' and of no immediate value.[2] Children and adolescents must be weaned away as quickly as possible from such imaginative frivolities like story-telling, and acquire the didactic literature of proverbs and wise sayings that enable the boy to cope with the realistic and matter-of-fact affairs of life. The accumulated wisdom of the past, the adults think, is contained in these proverbs and the reported deeds and acts of men of religious or social prestige. They are inordinately fond of quoting proverbs and maxims whenever an occasion for them arises. Rattray has observed the African's predilection for proverbs in his speech: much the same might be said for Silwa. He states that the best retort 'for any new-fangled suggestion or argument, however convincing, is to quote some proverb, however banal and inept, for such a reply is invested with all the force and sanctity of immemorial usage, and therefore conclusive'.[3]

Story-telling also includes the interesting events that happened in the village, or that happened to children. It is a more preferable pastime in winter than in summer, when boys, and occasionally girls, gather at a cosy corner outside the house 'to curtail the long winter nights' as one of the boys put it. On the whole, one can say that a child, on the average, spends an hour a week in these story-telling sessions. But this does not mean that all children take part in these sessions, or know fairy tales and stories. In fact, quite a few children, of both sexes, whom I asked in the compulsory school and in the neighbourhood, knew no stories of any kind. If parents tolerate these story-telling sessions, they do not consider them of any educative value at all.

Children, however, listen to stories and tell them to each other, not in the house or in the presence of the father, but usually outside the house. They will stop their narration on the approach of an adult, and consequently the writer was not able to listen to or observe any of their normal sessions. These sessions are seldom held during the day, as the boys believe that story-telling in daylight brings wrath, like sleeping in the late afternoon (nawmat al asr). [513] Here one sees the functional relationship between children's leisure and their economic responsibilities. Through such beliefs, with their concomitant emotional effects, the scope for flouting responsibility for work is delimited in a roundabout way. Like play, the community reluctantly admits the value of story-telling to children, accepts its occurrence at night as a safety valve, as then it would not wreck or endanger the 'puritanic' atmosphere.[1] 857* 538

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[1] See Chapter VII for the connection of 'lahw' and play.

[2] There are no novels at all amongst the books that the villagers possess.

[3] R. S. Rattray, 'The African Child in Proverb, Folklore and Fact', in *Africa*, Vol. VI, 1935, p. 426. For some of the proverbs collected in the village, see Appendix VI.

The first eleven stories recorded in this study are a common stock for most of the boys and girls in the village, but I found no girl who knew any of the rest of the stories. This is understandable, as these stories are usually related and heard by boys and girls till the age of eleven or twelve, but after this age story-telling among girls is frowned upon and punished. This is the main reason why their stock of tales is meagre compared with that of the boys. Here, as in play, girls are expected to toe the line of adults earlier than boys. 857* 539

Most of the stories collected were from the compulsory school children. By no means all of them knew the full text of the stories, but most of them at least recognized or felt they knew the first eleven stories. In examining those who had known some of the stories, they repeated them in an almost identical way.

Children normally begin their narration of a story by saying: 'There existed' (Feeh), whereupon the listeners reply, 'God exists' (Allah feeh); older boys and old men would normally begin by, 'It happened and in the past many a thing happened, and upon God we rely' (Kan ya ma kan, wa 'ala allah attuklan).[2] The younger boys finish off by exclaiming, 'I've been to your house and come back, I've eaten the hen before the cock' (Ruht 'indakum wi jeet, akalt al farkha gabl addik).

In the text of the stories and tales, one can find reflections of many of the social, moral and religious norms and attitudes. In the manifest content of the stories, such norms and attitudes as those governing the relationships between members of the family, social expectations, religious aspirations and desire for children are not difficult to discern and need no elaboration. [867]

Moreover, anthropologists and psychologists have also tried to explain the latent content of folk literature, myth and legends. The interpretations of Freudian, Jungian, and other schools of psychology have been occasionally alluded to in the footnotes of the story texts.[3] The orthodox Freudians, as well as the Jungians, because of their racial and generalized interpreta-

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[1] With regard to the fact that folk-stories are characteristically told at night, Hermant advances the theory that the choice of night is psychologically significant as after the day's work is finished and both narrator and listeners are tired, their critical powers of thinking, their attention and will are slackened. Thus social activities that are considered inappropriate during the day seem acceptable at night; in the same way certain themes in stories are exclusively acceptable during the evenings, and are incorporated in the folk-tale. See E. J. Lindgren, 'The Collection and Analysis of Folk-Lore', in *The Study of Society*, p. 360.

[2] This beginning is very similar to the way story-tellers in Iraq introduce their stories, as reported by E. S. Stevens, although by omitting 'ya' he misunderstood the meaning of the phrase and translated it as 'There was, there was not'. *Tales of Iraq*, London, 1931.

[3] C. G. Jung and C. Kerenyi, *An Introduction to a Science of Mythology* (translated by R. F. C. Hull), London, 1951.

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tions, take us away from the sociological relevance of fairy tales and folk stories. This approach has been criticized by anthropologists and the neo-Freudians who have a deeper appreciation of the cultural phenomena. Bidney asserts that great myths, for example, are great precisely because they lend themselves to a wide variety of interpretations and thus perform wonders in stimulating the creative imagination.[1] The need is felt to elicit the aid of oral traditions to contribute to the understanding of culture, and for its integration more fully with other cultural data 'to deepen our knowledge of human nature, the functioning of human societies, and the psycho-dynamics of the adjustment of individuals to the exigencies of their culturally constituted worlds'.[2] In the light of this, we have referred to some tales as having 'Oedipus reflections', meaning by that not the Freudian libidinal desires of the infantile situation, but expressions of one of the fundamental aspects of interpersonal relationships, that of the attitude towards authority.[3]

In his formulations of the concept of the 'basic personality structure', Kardiner points out the impact of social institutions on personality development. He has made use of folklore as a check, as well as a lead for the understanding of personality orientations as manifested in different thought processes and sequences, and different fantasy life. Folklore, in his view, is not an expression of general human psychic fantasies, and autochthonous creation, but related to the realities of social situations. Moreover, it expresses the current strains, conflicts and frustrations of the individual and his culture.[4] The fruitfulness of such an approach to folklore is also expressed by Susanne Langer, who maintains that folk tales, whether the animal fable, the trickster story, the ghost story, or the fairy tale, can be regarded as mirroring subjective wishful thinking and reflecting certain cultural frustrations of a given society.[5]

In our analysis of folk and children's tales in Silwa, the formulations of Kardiner are relevant and useful in an attempt to understand some of the problems related to the personality development in this community. We may regard these tales as expressions of trends in the psycho-dynamic

[1] He further claims that no single correct interpretation can be valid for any myth or legend, and that psycho-analysis, by applying their assumptions to them, are but inventing 'scientific myths' of their own. David Bidney, 'Concept of Myth and Psycho-cultural Evolution,' in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. LII, 1950, p. 25. See also R. Linton in his Foreword in Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*, p. xvii.

[2] A. Irving Hallowell, 'Myth, Culture and Personality', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLIX, 1947, p. 544.

[3] Erich Fromm, *The Forgotten Language* (*an Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales and Myths*), London, 1952.

[4] Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*, p. 214. He states that a cursory comparison of the folklore of Trobriand and Kwakiutl culture shows that each is the product of different life goals, different perceptions of institutional realities, different impulses which must be controlled and different methods of controlling them. (p. 127.)

[5] Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 1948, quoted by David Bidney, op. cit., p. 17.

adjustment of the individual in his society, revealing life goals, desires, fears, tensions of living in this environment. 857*

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In the stories in question one may discern the following three basic trends permeating them, or a combination of two or three of them in the same story. The first trend is the constant recurrence of themes of food, especially meat. If children tend to repeat mechanically the text of the tale, they certainly give wide and vivid scope to their imagination when the theme of food crops up during narration. The exclamation of 'Ya salam' is always ready to be uttered when a boy dwells expressively on a food theme in a story and thus gives other children some gratification for their fantasies about food.[1] In the tales, however, reference to situations where food is eaten, given, enjoyed, hidden, or some risk undertaken in obtaining it, is abundant. This could be correlated with other cultural data such as 'the sanctity of food', the belief that somebody might 'breathe on bread or food' and thus render it dangerous to eat, and hence the custom of covering bread on a tray of food from the eyes of a stranger, or inviting him to 'have a bite' if he comes unexpectedly.[2] One is justified in calling these themes expressions of a 'food anxiety' according to Kardiner. It is only possible for the writer here to suggest the relationship between this 'food anxiety' and some social forces, such as the low level of subsistence economy in the village, the precarious conditions of agricultural techniques in which hard work does not always reap its adequate rewards, being threatened before the introduction of perennial irrigation by Nile flooding and occasionally by torrents and uncontrollable plant pests. Consequent on all this is the fellah's rationalization of fate, with regard to life's adversities.

Secondly, in some of the stories one glimpses reflections of the nature of the Oedipus myth: in story VIII, where the child kills his stepmother (symbolizing the bad mother in the dual mother role) and then his father; in story XIII where children are drowned in the well by their father, and the one like the 'bob tail' who managed to emerge into life again and achieve union with the mother; in story XVII, where Jiha takes his revenge by killing the father of the thieves with his 'bull's tail' and gains access to the wealth of the cave (mother). In some stories there is emphasis on masculinity, e.g. in story III where the only billy-goat that survives the ordeal of the wolf (the devouring father) is the one which is aware of its masculine capacity represented by its horns, enabling it to stand up to the father. Like the symbolism in the children's games, their tales also express certain anxieties of the castration type, especially in those stories of Jiha, who is deprived of his bull, of his money and of his blanket (XV, XVI, XVII).

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[1] This was quite obvious during some of the 'children's hour' I used to hold.

[2] Making food covers (waleel, pl. willat) out of palm-tree leaves is a flourishing female occupation, and practically every girl starts learning how to make them before she gets married. See also Chapter IV for the villagers' secretiveness concerning food. [962]

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*857 539 On encountering in the folklore a constellation like the Oedipus situation, it is more profitable, instead of immediately recognizing 'a universal Oedipus complex', biologically determined, to proceed 'to examine the conditions in the actual experience of the individual, which contribute to the formation of such a constellation'.[1] Such expressions could be well [155] explained in the light of the social institutions of the village, the dominant feature of which is that the individual in his 'growing up' finds himself constantly coming up against authority and power, and therefore his orientation for achievement of social or psychological independence is grossly hampered. Paradoxically enough, the villagers' vulnerability and [156] hypersensitivity to the feeling of 'dependence' on social or economic levels are very intense. To remind someone of help rendered to him is a positive insult; and it is disgraceful to work as a hired labourer. 'The repudiation of dependency is surely making a virtue of necessity.' The individual's craving for power manifests itself in such social norms as refusal to accept compensation, generosity which implies giving without being asked, so that the receiver would not be dependent or obliged to give back; otherwise it is a reciprocal type of give and take, making the receiver a debtor. To this virtue of repudiating dependency may be attributed the excessive [576] insistence while offering, with excessive reluctance in accepting anything, whether a cigarette or an invitation to food. This almost ritualistic feature governs the etiquette of behaviour in many situations where interpersonal relationships are involved.

The third theme which occurs in some of the tales is that of revenge and retaliation to 'clear one's name' from shame ('ar) (stories IX, XIV, XVI, XVII, XVIII). In these tales, even Jiha, the insignificant man, must take revenge on his detractors. With this, there is emphasis on trickery and chicanery to achieve one's ends and to outdo one's enemies. Such themes, according to Kardiner, are indications of emotional tensions of people who 'oscillate between uninhibited self-glorification and constant anxiety of being outdone and humiliated'.[2] As in Japan, a slur darkens one's good name and has to be removed without a compromise, although in Silwa there are no cases of suicide ever reported as a means of ridding oneself [762] from shame as such an act would constitute a major sin.[3] One may attribute this sensitive development of the ego to situations of excessive sibling [155] rivalry, and the unevenness of the process of 'growing up', where severe disciplines are imposed during childhood, and severe sexual restrictions and sex dichotomy during adolescence, in contrast with a permissive infancy-training system.[4]

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[1] Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*, p. 133.

[2] A. Kardiner, op. cit., p. 117.

[3] See Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, p. 145.

[4] See J. F. Ritchie, 'The African as a Suckling and as Adult', *Rhodes-Livingstone Papers*, No. 9, 1943, for the effects of an uneven process of 'growing up' on adult behaviour and personality development from a psycho-analytical point of view.

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Another tentative psychological explanation of fairy tales and folk tales in their social setting is advanced by Bartlett. He argues that the details and plots of such stories are usually derived from social customs and institutions. As social products, their psychological interest lies in ascertaining which of the three dominant tendencies of the instinctive social relationships, comradeship, assertiveness, and submissiveness, figure largely in them. In determining which of these instinctive tendencies takes first place in its expression in folklore, the cultural conditions and the external environment may be regarded as one of the most important factors. Thus in the folk tales, one could detect an expression of 'the preferred persistent social group tendencies' which could also be found in other fields of the same group's culture.[1]

Looking at these stories from such an angle, one can claim that the majority reflect 'assertive instinctive tendencies'. In story I the cock, which is the weakest of all the other animals mentioned, stands as the sole authority for information; in II the cock and the goat triumph over the donkey; in III the billy-goat asserts himself over the wolf; in V the cock (symbolizing the child) won the day with all those he dealt with; in VII the fox managed to laugh at the fisherman; in IX the boy succeeds in eloping with the chief's daughter; in X the nanny-goat scorches the wolf; in XI the scabby orphan boy asserts himself by having access to things which his uncle does not know and proves to be trickier than his uncle's wife; in XIV the poor boy and his sister get rid of their cousins who were richer and numerous; in the three Goha stories, XV, XVII, XVIII, the ridiculous and insignificant man asserts himself over his enemies and those who ridicule him. In story XVI he failed because of his profanity, for which he was deprived of his money.[2]

Following Bartlett's hypothesis, we find that the assertive instinctive tendencies loom large in most of these stories and could be regarded as 'the preferred response' in the group. This conclusion corresponds largely to our interpretations in the light of Kardiner's formulations. The weak, the insignificant, and the ordinary asserts its identity and becomes, through fantasy, as equivalent or even superior to the more fortunate and the more powerful. The link between 'assertiveness' as an over-reaction to an [157] ego structure sensitive to being outdone or to feeling of inferiority is confirmed by the findings of clinical psychology.

In this connection, it is not without significance that one of the first phrases that the child learns to speak is 'May God curse your father', as a retort encouraged by his parents to anyone who may try to humiliate him.

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[1] For F. C. Bartlett's views, I relied on the summary given in E. J. Lindgren, op. cit., pp. 358–66.

[2] In this connection the evidence from folklore and proverbs confirms Westermarck's observation that amongst the Moors God is always mentioned in a reverent manner. 'There is nothing of that familiarity or jocularity which is frequent in European sayings referring to Him, causing annoyance to puritanic writers.' *Wit and Wisdom in Morocco*, London, 1930, p. 51.

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So far we have been chiefly concerned with analysis of tales mainly from a functional point of view, especially as data to be brought to bear on the socio-psychological problems of culture-personality. We have not exhausted the various ways of analysis of such oral traditions such as discerning a given motif, a tale type, a quality of inner experience, a sense of wonder and astonishment, and so forth.[1]

I

Once upon a time a cock witnessed the falling of the roof of a house, then the fox came along to enquire as to what happened, to which the cock replied, 'Can't you see?' Then came the wolf, who asked the fox about the matter, but the latter referred him to the cock saying that he himself did not know. Then came the tigress (daba) asking the wolf, who referred her to the fox, who referred her to the cock. Then came the silowa, who asked the tigress, who referred her to the wolf, who referred her to the fox, who referred her to the cock.[2]

II

There were once a goat, a cock, and a donkey who tended a farm together. One morning, on going together to the farm they discovered that the crops were eaten. As the goat and the cock were staying in the same house, they suspected the donkey of secretly eating the plants, but he denied it as he alleged he was lying sick in bed the night before. As they did not believe him they asked him to join them in taking a vow whilst jumping over the well. The cock crowed 'cock-a-doodle-do' and jumped over the well. The goat bleated 'na-na' whilst successfully jumping over the well. Then came the donkey braying 'hee-haw', but while he was jumping a wolf, who had lain hidden in the well, grabbed the donkey by the leg and gobbled him up.[3]

III

Three billy-goats were attacked by a wolf. Before he started tearing them to pieces to eat them, he asked the first billy-goat, 'What are these things sticking out of your head?' To which he answered, 'They are horns'. The wolf tore him apart and devoured him. Then the wolf asked the second one, 'What are these things sticking out of your head?' To which he answered, 'They are horns'. The same fate befell him. Then the wolf asked

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[1] For a comprehensive survey of the various ways of analysis of folklore see E. J. Lindgren, op. cit. For a most stimulating analysis of 'The Oedipus Myth, and the fairy tale of Red Riding Hood', see E. Fromm, *The Forgotten Language*, London, 1952.

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[2] Reflections of fear of committing oneself can be detected in this tale, an expression of the uneasy climate of interpersonal relations in the community.

[3] Apart from its manifest moral content, the latent content could be regarded as one with Oedipus reflections taking the donkey as the father, and the goat and cock as mother and child respectively.

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the third goat, 'What are these things sticking out of your head?' The answer this time was, 'They are loaded guns'.[1] Immediately the wolf heard this, he fled.

IV

Once upon a time there was a bride who, having been adorned with jewels, went to the Nile to gaze upon the water. While she was standing there she was seen by a crocodile, an animal which is always attracted by the glitter and tinkle of jewellery. Immediately the crocodile saw this beautiful girl, he advanced to swallow her whole and dived back into the the water. The girl lived in the crocodile's belly for a long time, until one day when the beast was on land, she remembered that she had a dagger, which she used to hack her way out of the crocodile, thus escaping alive to be reunited with her husband.[2]

V

A cock was once scratching the ground with his claws and found some seeds which he took to a woman and asked her to bake him two loaves of bread, which she did. The cock took the two loaves of bread and during his wanderings he found a hungry man tending his geese, to whom he offered the two loaves. The man ate the loaves, and enjoyed eating them, as they were made of wheat. But after that the cock asked the man either to hand back his loaves or to give him a goose instead of them, so the man offered him a goose.

The cock found another man tending his sheep, and waiting for a chicken or a goose to eat, which the cock was ready to offer. In the same manner, after the shepherd had eaten the goose, the cock insisted on either having back his goose or getting a ram instead, so the shepherd gave him a ram.

The cock wandered further, and found a group of men tending buffaloes, and looking for a ram to kill for a special meal, and the cock offered them his ram. After the meal was over, he made the same plea and got a buffalo.

The cock, wandering still further, arrived at a village where he found a wedding, the celebration of which was lacking meat, and he offered his buffalo. After the feasting, the cock went to the bridegroom and asked him to return his buffalo, or let him have the bride. So at last he got the bride and married her, and they lived together happily ever after.

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[1] Assuming that these tales are transmitted from a time immemorial, this reference to 'loaded guns' must be a comparatively recent modification.

[2] This resembles the well-known stories of the hero in the belly of the whale. Joseph Campbell states that in the Eskimo tale of Raven and the whale, the principal deed of the adventurer is to make fire in the interior of the monster, thus bringing about the whale's death and his own release. As fire-making is symbolic of the sex act, the tale denotes the passage of the hero through the threshold of life into a sphere of rebirth symbolized in the life-centring, life-renewing act. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, pp. 90, 91, 248. Erich Fromm maintains that such stories, like that of Jonah, express an inner experience for a condition of being protected and isolated, of safe withdrawal from communication with other human beings. *The Forgotten Language*, p. 29.

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A mother had two boys, one called the clever boy (nasih), the other called the simpleton (dalihi). The simpleton went home to bring the midday meal for his brother, who was working on the farm. The meal consisted of loaves of millet and one loaf of wheat bread, besides a large pat of butter. On his way to the field the simpleton discovered that he was followed by his shadow, to which he constantly said, 'May God curse your father, why are you following me? Take this piece of bread and go away.' He kept throwing pieces of millet bread to his shadow until he had used up all the millet loaves.

Later on he found a cave into which he threw the loaf of wheat bread, uttering in horror, 'Oh, this is my father's open mouth. My father is hungry and I must feed him.' Thus he distributed all the food which he was supposed to take to his brother.

A little later he found some cactus which looked very dry, so he immediately threw the pat of butter on to these plants, saying disgustedly, 'Oh, this is my mother's hair, it looks so dry, I cannot bear it'.

On his arrival at the field his brother asked him about the food, and he answered in an enraged voice, 'How can you enjoy any food when your younger brother was following me all the way, while your father is starved and while your mother's hair is dry?'

The clever brother, therefore, had to go home to get his meal, leaving his simple brother to look after the sheep. While he was tending the sheep the simpleton ordered them to eat only the upper part of the grass and not the lower, on pain of punishment. By the time the clever brother returned the simpleton had killed all the flock except a goat and a sheep. When the former asked the latter about what he had done, the answer was that the flock had not obeyed his orders.

At the close of the evening the two brothers went home together, and on the way they found a horse, but the simpleton insisted on killing it and dividing it equally. Later they found a huge kite which they rode, but while they were on its back, the idiot stuck his finger into the kite's anus, and by so doing, the kite lowered her rump. In this way the simpleton fell off her back and was killed, while the clever boy returned home safely.[1]

VII

A fisherman on his way back from the river with his basket full of fish, saw a fox. When he came near the fox, the latter lay stretched on the

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[1] This is one of the most favourite tales amongst both boys and girls. According to C. Jung the 'shadow' in this tale is an archetype embracing the inferior and less commendable part of a person (*The Integration of the Personality*, p. 20). The story, in Jungian psychology, could be interpreted as representative of the negative (idiot) and positive (clever) brother, the unconscious and the conscious, aspects of personality. Self-realization and individuation can only come through the co-operation between the two aspects, and the unconscious content can overwhelm, inhibit and even destroy personal fulfilment. (C. Jung and E. C. Kerenyi, *An Introduction to the Science of Mythology*, p. 14.)

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ground pretending to be dead. The fisherman picked the fox up and put it in his basket on top of the fish. Surreptitiously the fox began to eat the fish, and after he had gobbled them all up, jumped out of the basket and mocked the fisherman, saying, 'I have triumphed over you' (literally, I have seared you). 'You will never be able to use my skin either in winter or in summer, while I have eaten up all your fish.'

VIII

There was a man who had first a daughter and then a son. After the death of their mother their father married again. Their stepmother[1] hated them even more because she herself had not borne any children, and she used to make them work very hard for her.

One day she gave her stepchildren two baskets of equal size to fill with fuel (animal dung, bits of straw and wood found along the roads). She promised a loaf of wheat bread and an egg to the one who filled the basket first. The brother did not gather much fuel, and for most of the time he was taking fuel out of his sister's basket, and putting it into his own basket. In this way he filled his basket first, and returned home, asking his stepmother for the promised reward. The stepmother told him to wait until she grilled the egg in her neighbour's oven, and asked him to go to sleep in the meanwhile. On her return the boy was sleeping, whereupon she slew him with a sharp knife, put him in a pot, and proceeded to cook him as if he had been a goose.

When the sister returned, she enquired about her brother, and the stepmother replied that she had sent him on an errand to his maternal aunt. She asked her to go on heating the pot with the fuel, asking her not to take the lid off the pot. But while the stepmother went out to bake the bread in the neighbour's oven, the girl lifted the lid and saw her brother's finger: she was grieved and started to cry. When the stepmother returned she asked her why she was crying, and whether she had lifted the lid. The girl answered that she was not crying, but that her tears were caused by the smoke, as she had to blow the fire constantly for the fuel was not dry enough.

In the evening the father came home and the wife offered him his meal which consisted of his son's flesh. On enquiring why his daughter was crying, the stepmother told him that she refused her dinner, and that she could not find any reason for her grief. When the bones were thrown away, the girl collected them all and put them in a jewel box which she hid under the water-jar from which the family drank. After a while, the child's ghost (sul) appeared, singing a beautiful tune: 'I am a green sparrow, who was killed by my stepmother, and whose flesh was eaten by my bloody father (aboya alars), and whose bones were collected by my affectionate sister.'

One day while the stepmother was grinding corn, the boy sang the

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[1] The stepmother is always referred to descriptively as the wife of the father (literally, the father's woman: 'marat al-abu', clas. Arabic, 'imrat al-ab').

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previous ditty for her, and she asked him to repeat it, expressing her admiration for his beautiful voice. But he refused to do so, unless she opened her mouth, and on her so doing, he dropped a stone of poison in her mouth which caused her death. He sang likewise to his father, when he was manipulating the 'shadoof', and was asked to repeat the song. The boy refused to do so unless his father stretched himself in the water, and on the latter's so doing, the boy seized the opportunity to drown his father and thus got rid of him like his stepmother.

The boy sang the same refrain to his sister when she was filling her jar from the river, and on her asking to repeat it, he requested her to open her mouth, into which he dropped a piece of sugar. He used to go to different places especially on ceremonial occasions, singing the same tune, repeating it on condition that the hearers should give him something edible or valuable which he would always take home to his sister.[1]

IX

There was a man whose wealth consisted mainly of camels, which he used to breed and rear. God gave him a son whom he sent to the Kuttab to memorize the Koran. After the death of this man, the wife took over the husband's task of tending the camels and thereby caused much embarrassment to her son in the Kuttab, as other boys used to sneer at him for letting his mother do the work which he himself ought to be doing. The boy, thus goaded by his mates, told his mother of his wish to do the same job as his father, but his mother tried to convince him that it was better for him to continue memorizing the Koran till he finished it. At last, however, the boy insisted on relieving his mother of her task, and began to look after his father's camels.

One day the boy, now reaching the marriageable age, while fetching water from the well for the camels, noticed a beautiful girl on a camel followed by a slave. He invited her to bring her camel to drink from his well, and when he caught a glance of her at close quarters he immediately fell in love with her. The girl also fell in love with him and as a gesture of her love, dropped her silver anklet into the well. After she had left, the boy went down into the well and retrieved the anklet: this made him even more desirous of marrying her.

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[1] This is another favourite. In this story there are Oedipus reflections; the child by killing his father and bad mother (stepmother), his incestuous longings triumph at last by uniting himself to his sister (which is also a symbol of the good mother). However, the tale represents a state of regression. According to Freud, the growing out of psycho-sexual desires for incestuous longings, achieving a state of horror with regard to incest, is a sign of maturity (*Totem and Taboo*, p. 17). According to Erich Fromm this regression is due to fear of authority and repressed desire for dependency, a conflict between the desire for independence and freedom in growth and social arrangements frustrating the scope for such growth. In the light of his latest book, *The Forgotten Language*, this story could be interpreted as representing the victory of the matriarchal principle (mother and sister) of love and affection over the patriarchal principle of authority and hierarchy.

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From that day the boy's health deteriorated, and he lost his appetite. The mother hired someone to look after the camels, and directed all her attention to the treatment of her son with charms and medicine. One medicine man told her that her son was not actually sick, but in love; and on enquiring about this, the son confessed everything to his mother. Then she gave him the best she-camel she had and told him to go and visit the girl's people.

On his arrival in the girl's village, he discovered that the girl's father was the chief of his tribe, and one who never allowed any stranger to enter his land. Somehow the boy managed to contact the slave who had followed the girl on her errand, and who told him that the girl's father had a custom of confining himself to his home for a week, appearing publicly in the following week, and that that very day was his first day of retirement. The boy was pleased at this news and enquired of the slave the best way of speaking to his beloved. The slave told him that he should follow her camel which, at the end of the day, went to the house to be received by the girl herself. So the boy tied his she-camel to the girl's he-camel, and in the evening he succeeded in meeting her. During the night they fled away on their camels from that land.

During their sleep on the way, another chief passed by and admired the sleeping girl's beauty, and desired her for himself. While the chief was planning to abduct the girl, his he-camel had intercourse with the boy's she-camel, a fact which the boy discovered when his she-camel became pregnant a short time after he returned home. Despairing and frustrated, the boy returned to his mother, where he relapsed into his sickness.

When the boy's camel brought forth a he-camel, the mother told her son that it was this young camel that would help him to rescue his beloved as it would run faster than its father, the chief's camel. After three years, when the young camel had grown up, the boy went to the same spot where his beloved had been taken away, traced the footprints of the camel on which the chief had ridden, and thus reached the land where his beloved was.

On his arrival, he enquired about her from an old woman, who told him that the girl was now married to the chief and had two sons by him. The old woman, however, arranged a meeting between the boy and his once beloved, who on seeing him told him that it was now all over between them, but that she would tell of a device to enable him to have his revenge. She told him that her husband had married another wife before her, one who had four daughters, and they would be walking in the village all by themselves that night while all the other people in the tribe would retire to their homes, so she told him to take a chance of snatching the chief's eldest daughter and running off with her.

The plot succeeded and the boy eloped with the chief's eldest daughter. Immediately the chief heard about the news, he rode on his camel in

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pursuit, but could not catch up with the elopers. Then he gave up chasing, after his realization that the man who had carried off his daughter was none other than the person from whom he had stolen his beloved. The chief inferred this from the fact that the camel that the daughter-snatcher was riding must have been the son of his camel and thus much faster than his sire.

When the chief returned home, he asked his wife about the boy's land, and after a time he equipped himself with gifts and food and went with some members of his tribe to the boy's home. On his arrival, he blessed the marriage of his daughter to the boy, and told him that he had avenged himself.

X

There were three nanny-goats who met three men, one carrying clover, the second wood, and the third bricks. The first nanny-goat asked one of the men to give her the clover so that she might build a home for herself, and he gave it to her. The second goat asked the second man to give her the wood for the same purpose and he gave it to her. The third goat asked the third man to give her the bricks and he did so.

Each of the nanny-goats built a house for herself from the material she had received from each man. Now, one day the wolf visited the goat who was living in the clover house, enticing her to come out, but when she refused, he jumped into her house, and devoured her. The second day he went to the second goat living in the wooden house and asked her to come out, but when she also refused, he jumped into the house and ate her. On the third day he went to see the third goat living in the brick house, and when she did not come out he endeavoured to jump into her house, but in vain.

Then the wolf tried to trick the surviving nanny-goat by telling her that he knew of some good grass where she could graze. She asked him where it was and promised to meet him there at an appointed time, but she went earlier, fed herself, and returned home. After the wolf had discovered that she had tricked him, he went again to her house. When he knocked at the door the goat bleated, 'I have eaten the grass and triumphed over you'. This time the wolf tried to tempt her with oranges growing in a place he knew about. As before she enquired as to where the place was, and went to it earlier than agreed. When he arrived at the place, he saw her at the tree. Then he said, 'This is a black day for you, you shan't escape from me'. On hearing this she threw an orange into the distance, and while he was running to get it she escaped home.

Then the wolf decided to make another attempt by asking the goat to invite him inside her house. She agreed, and told him to enter through a hole in the roof. While he was climbing she put a bathful of boiling water underneath the hole in the roof, and when the wolf jumped he found himself scalded and stuck in the hot water. He entreated the goat to rescue

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him, but she left him there to die, and henceforth she lived in peace and tranquillity.[1]

XI

There was once a scabby boy who was an orphan (literally one who had eaten all his relations), except for an uncle with whom he was living. The uncle had a wife who was in love with another man, and the scabby boy knew about this affair while the uncle did not.

One day the boy left his uncle in the field and went home unexpectedly, hiding himself behind the door. The lover came to see his uncle's wife, who told him that she would cook him a chicken and leave it on the shelf, and that he could help himself to it late that night. After the boy had heard this he went to the farm and resumed his work after making excuses to his uncle for his absence. When the scabby boy and his uncle returned home in the evening the wife offered them millet bread and salt for their meal. Just before they started eating, a cat came along, and the boy pinched it till it howled in pain. The uncle asked the boy why the cat was screaming, and the latter replied, 'The cat says there is a cooked chicken on the shelf'. Then the uncle went by himself to the shelf, and on discovering the chicken asked his wife why she had not placed it before them. She apologized, saying that she had completely forgotten it.

This plot of the wife promising the lover special food which he could fetch at night, of the boy overhearing what was said, and of the uncle asking about what the cat said on her screaming, went on for several days, and on every occasion the wife managed to give good excuses for not offering her husband the good food. The lover, however, began to think that the woman was deceiving him, but she told him what was happening and they decided to kill the cat. On the following day the woman promised her lover a turkey which she would hide in the chaff. The boy overheard this also, and when the uncle returned home, he was offered the usual millet loaf and salt. Then suddenly the boy told his uncle that he had forgotten to give the cow its evening feed, and went to the barn, and delved into the chaff until he had uncovered the turkey. He dashed back to his uncle, telling him that he had found a turkey but that he was not sure whether it was dead or alive. The uncle went to see about this, and on his finding the turkey violently rebuked his wife, who again excused herself on the ground that she had forgotten about it.

The lover became more annoyed than ever, and the wife agreed with him this time to take a cooked ram to his farm. But as she did not know the whereabouts of her lover's farm he decided to show her the way by scattering chaff along the path to his farm. Again the boy overheard this, and he removed the chaff and scattered the lover's trail, making one lead-

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[1] If the nanny-goat symbolizes 'the child', then this story interpreted on the reductive level (infantile situations) represents an Oedipus situation where the child kills the father (wolf), and lives in peace in the house (mother), or according to Erich Fromm it could be representative of male-female conflict.

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ing to his uncle's farm. The woman took the ram and followed the trail, but to her bewilderment she found herself at her husband's farm.

The wife then decided to poison both the uncle and the boy, and while she was telling her lover about it, the boy again overheard her. He went straight to the drug seller and requested him that if his uncle's wife came to buy poison from him, he should sell her the dried yoke of eggs and advise her to sprinkle it over the cooked chickens which should be eaten for dinner every evening during the next week, and that this device would bring more decisive results than ordinary poison by the end of the week. The boy told his uncle about the plot, and they agreed to pretend to be dead at the end of the week.

On their supposed death, people began wailing, whilst the lover came to console the wife, he also told her, 'We are triumphant now, you are the mare and I am the horse'. Then the boy woke his uncle, saying, 'Wake up uncle, before the horses trample on you'. The uncle arose immediately, and murdered both his wife and her lover.

XII

Once upon a time there was a barren wife who had always longed for a daughter, and she took a vow that if she had one she would call her 'Hab-al-ruman'. After she had borne a daughter she became jealous of her, and used to ask the moon on its appearing every night, 'Who is prettier, I or Hab-al-ruman?' The moon's answer was invariably 'Hab-al-ruman'. As the mother felt snubbed by such an answer, she decided to get rid of her daughter, of whom she was so terribly jealous; she thereupon handed her over to an old woman telling her to abandon her on the mountains.

It so happened that after a short time the young daughter was rescued by the Sultan's son, who took her to his palace and looked after her. Meanwhile, the mother repeatedly asked the moon the same question, and the moon insisted on giving the same answer. At last she asked the moon where her daughter was, and on learning that she was in the Sultan's palace, she gave an old hag some poison to rub between her daughter's fingers on shaking hands with her in the palace. One day when the Sultan's son came to the palace, he found Hab-al-ruman dead. He then placed her in a chest, filling a similar chest with gold, and ordered the two chests to be left in the mountains. The 'ghool' and the 'silowas' were passing along one day through the mountains and found the two chests; Hab-al-ruman's chest fell to the ghool, who, on opening it, found this beautiful dead girl, and began to wash her for burial. But during the washing, as the ghool was rubbing between the girl's fingers, she suddenly came to life. The ghool looked after her until she grew up, and married her to a royal prince. By the Prince she had a boy whom the ghool snatched away. The Prince was grieved, and his grief became heavier after the ghool had snatched away a second and later a third son. At last the Prince

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954

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could bear it no longer, and accused his wife of being an ogress—a silowa who ate her children. To find consolation the Prince decided to perform his pilgrimage, and before he left for Mecca he asked his wife what gifts she would like from the Holy Places, and was surprised to learn that her request was for two boxes, one filled with sabbar, and the other with henna.

On his return from the Higaz, the Prince decided to take another wife who might bear him children who would survive. This made the heart of his wife heavy and she would open the box of sabbar chanting 'Oh, sabbar, give me patience, oh, henna, let the ghool have mercy on me'.[1] The Prince went forward with the preparations for his marriage, and while the ceremony was being publicly announced, and the people sending in their gifts, the ghool surreptitiously brought the Princess's three sons back to their mother. Immediately the children started looking into the cooking utensils in which meat was being cooked for the occasion, but the servants pushed them away, preventing them from getting any meat out of the utensils. The boys were annoyed and exclaimed, 'This is strange; the food belongs to our father, yet servants prevent us from eating'.[2] Then the children's mother told them to go and snatch the razor from the barber who was ceremonially cutting their father's hair. Having done this, the sons began running towards their mother, followed closely by the Prince who enquired about the boys. The mother told him, 'These are your sons who were with their grandfather, the ghool, who brought them up and has now sent them back to see their father's wedding'. The Prince was overjoyed on the return of his sons, and went out to the gathering accompanied by his sons and cried aloud, 'O men, those of you who love the chosen Prophet can turn the wedding into a circumcision ceremony'.[3]

XIII

Once upon a time a childless woman prayed to God to give her a boy, even as small as a billy-goat's bob tail, and her prayers were answered. One day the bob tail (the little boy) hid himself in the grass, and was eaten by his father's cow. But one day, while the cow was about to turn the water wheel, the bob tail, who was now in her belly, said 'Hush', and thus stopped the cow from turning. The bob tail's brother told his father about the cow. But the latter did not believe him, and accused him of lying, and drowned him in the well. The father then asked his daughter to attend to the turning of the water wheel, but she also complained of the cow in the same way as her brother, and met the same fate by being drowned in the well. This time it was the father himself who attended to the water wheel, and realized that his children's complaint about the cow was true, and he decided to sell the cow to a butcher.

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[1] In Arabic the phrases are 'Ya sabbar, sabbir kalbi, Ya henna, hannini al ghool 'alai'.

[2] The exclamation phrases in Arabic make a rhyme: 'al 'aish 'aish abouna, wal khadam yutruduna.'

[3] This also rhymes: 'Alli yihib annabi al mukhtar, yiklib azzwag tahar.'

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When the butcher had slaughtered the animal, he distributed it amongst the customers, one of whom, a woman, bought the tripe out of which came the bob tail. The woman was terrified of this emerging ghost and left the tripe, which the bob tail then took to his mother.

On another occasion the bob tail hid himself behind a tree, whilst a gang of thieves were distributing their booty, whereupon he appeared suddenly, frightening them away. He was thus left alone to collect the booty, which he took to his mother.[1]

XIV

There was a family of seven brothers and their sister, whose paternal cousins, a brother and a sister, lived in another house. The seven brothers were poor, while the cousin was rich, and out of envy the brothers wished to do away with their cousin, but later they changed their minds and decided to abandon him in the mountains. One night they carried him off to the mountains and tied him to the back of a tigress who was with young. Then they brought the girl cousin to their house with all the wealth that her brother possessed. After a short time the tigress gave birth to a cub, and passed frequently through the village on her way to the Nile roaring, 'Ay, ay, there is a son of Adam on my back; ay, ay, O sons of Adam, come and release him'. As this roaring was heard every time the tigress passed through the village, the brothers realized the danger in store for them by these threats of the tigress, who might attack them at any moment, and so decided to release their cousin. One night they went out to the mountains with their knives, cut their cousin from the tigress' back, and returned home with him.

The unfortunate man's sister found her brother in a deplorable state of health, as worms were coming out of his back, and the rest of his body was full of wounds. She therefore locked him in a room, and determined that she must make a great effort to restore his health. She used to slaughter a ram for him every day, and by doing so his health gradually improved. Feeling better, her brother asked her one day to fetch in a sword to take his revenge on his cousins, but she insisted that he was not yet fit for such a task as he could not lift on his back a sack full of sand. The sister went on feeding her brother on his daily ram, and a month later, he succeeded in carrying the sack, thus proving that he had completely regained his strength, and was let out of the room.

One day, a short time after his release from his confinement, the cousin attacked the seven brothers while they were eating and killed them all, but while he was about to slay their sister, his own sister intervened, and told him that she would be his future wife.

The cousins were married, but the wife could not forget what had happened to her brothers, and wanted to have revenge on her husband's

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[1] Here one can also detect a pattern of an Oedipus story.

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sister. With this aim in view, she hid two sparrows' eggs in her sister-in-law's porridge, who after eating it, became pregnant, bringing forth two sparrows.

The two sparrows, intimidated by their mother, continually pestered their uncle's wife. Hostilities reached their climax when one day, while the latter was sieving the corn, the sparrows came to scatter it all over the ground. Every time she said 'Hish, hish', to drive them away, they answered back, 'Hish to you, may your face be removed'.[1]

The husband, on his wife's complaint, decided to get rid of the sister, who had to leave her brother's home and wander with her two sparrow sons. One day she found a palace, and under its shade she rested, while her sparrow sons went gathering food for her. On looking out of his palace, the Prince saw this beautiful woman, whom he let into the palace and decided to marry her. And by him she had two daughters.

One day, while her brother was hunting in the mountains, he came to this palace where his sister was living. On asking for hospitality from the palace the brother was recognized by the sister, but he did not know her until she told him who she was. She offered him food and showed him her daughters as well as her sparrow sons. He was deeply touched and decided to take his sister back home, and to get rid of his wife who was the cause of their separation. The brother confessed his guilt to his sister, and told her that after all it was she who had prevented him from killing the girl who was now his wife, along with her brothers. The brother and his sister returned and settled in their home, and lived happily ever after.

XV

Jiha was one night sleeping outside his house, and on waking in the morning he found that his bed blanket, in which he had tied his money, had been stolen.[2] Jiha was very upset and waited until winter to attempt to get back his cover. On a very cold night in the following winter he invited all the village people, old and young, to a ceremonial oath-meal, for which he slaughtered a bull.

People came along; everybody wrapping himself up in the thickest blanket he possessed. Jiha himself began distributing the meat, scanning each guest; if the guest were old, Jiha would say, 'Oh, you don't need meat, you have eaten enough meat in your life', and if the guest were young he would say, 'Oh, you don't need meat, you will have many other chances in your life to eat meat'. In this way he went round with the meat until he discovered the man who had stolen his blanket; this he seized, and then asked everybody to be off, saying, 'You may go away now, it's only Jiha himself who deserves his own beef'.

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[1] In Arabic it is a rhyming phrase: 'Hish tihishak, wi tagla wishak.'

[2] Jiha is a symbol of an insignificant and ridiculous person. In the Cairo dialect he is referred to as 'Goha'.

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Jiha had a bull which he was fattening up to sell in the market. He took great pride in this, making great show of it in the village, boasting about the money he would get from the bull. Everyone asked Jiha to say, when he used to boast about his future wealth, that he would get it 'if God wills' (insha Allah). On each occasion Jiha replied: 'There is no need to add this phrase, because the bull is mine, and God has nothing to do with all this; I shall sell the bull and get the money, whether God wills it or not'.

On market day Jiha was eagerly looking forward to selling his bull and declared ostentatiously that from now on he would become a rich man. People again advised him to say 'if God wills', but he refused to comply. He sold his bull at last, putting his money in his pocket. A thief had been watching him, and deftly stole the money.

Jiha went off to buy some new clothes, swaggering and puffed up with conceit. When he put his hand in his pocket to pay the merchant he found that his money had gone. Then people came to ask Jiha about his money, and his reply was, 'If God wills, I have lost it'.

XVII

Jiha had a fat bull which did not allow anybody to enter the house without trying to toss him. Jiha's wife could not bear the bull's presence in the house, and repeatedly asked her husband to sell it. But Jiha insisted that he would not dispose of it unless green grass grew on the bull's back. One day Jiha's mother-in-law came into the house and the bull kicked her and broke her leg. The wife became more furious, and asked other people's advice concerning her husband's bull. An old woman advised her that instead of filling her water tin with water from the Nile, to fill it with earth and green grass from the field, and to put it on the bull's back. This she did, and the following morning she woke her husband telling him to get ready to sell the bull as the green grass had grown on the bull's back. Then Jiha asked his wife to heat him some water for his bath, and to prepare his tea before he went to the market in a nearby town.

Jiha took the bull to the market, but on his way he heard the voice of a man calling out, 'Oh, you, the owner of that billy-goat, come here'. Jiha pretended not to hear this remark and passed on. But the chief of the robbers (for such he was) ordered three of his gang to fetch Jiha and his bull. The three robbers went off and brought Jiha to the Chief who reprimanded him for not obeying his orders instantly. Jiha apologized, saying that he thought that the Chief's words were not directed to him as he had a bull and not a billy-goat. Anyhow, the thieves killed the bull, cutting it up into sixty pieces, and each one having a piece. Jiha entreated the robber chief to give him the tail of his bull as his share, which the Chief did. On his return home, Jiha told his wife about the thieves and how he managed to keep only the bull's tail. The wife set up a wailing,

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putting dust on her head, and taking the blame upon herself, because she had nagged him to sell the animal.

Jiha, however, was determined to revenge himself on the thieves, so one day he disguised himself in an old woman's dress, and repaired to the thieves' cave. It was night, and the thieves were just going out on their expedition, when they met this old woman whom they asked to come into their cave to entertain their father who was a very weak old man. Jiha was taken round the cave by the old man after the thieves had gone. He showed special interest in a type of garroting machine, and asked the old man how it worked. The latter began to demonstrate, and put his neck into the noose, whereupon Jiha lost no time in pulling the rope and half-strangling the old man, beating him meanwhile with the bull's tail, which was studded with nails. During the beating Jiha called out, 'I am not a woman as you see me, I am the owner of the bull'. After taking whatever he could lay his hand on, Jiha returned to his wife, and told her what he had done with the thieves' father.

On their return, the thieves found their father in a very poor way, and intended taking him to a medicine man. The next evening Jiha appeared in the disguise of a medicine man, declaring in front of the cave his unusual powers in treating all kinds of illnesses. He was taken into the cave to see the sick man. After consulting the stars and his beads, he told them that their sick father needed the milk of a deer which had only borne one offspring. As this was a rare animal, all the sons went out in various directions in search of the prescribed type of deer. When Jiha was sure that the thieves were a long way from the cave, he took out the bull's tail which was studded with nails, and started beating the old man again, saying to him, 'I am not a medicine man, I am the owner of the bull'. Then he asked him where the treasure was kept, and on being told he unlocked the door and helped himself to as much of the gold and silver he found there as he could carry.

On the following day Jiha asked one of his friends who was a fast runner, to go to the thieves' cave and announce that he was the owner of the bull. Jiha then followed his friend who, on announcing that he was the owner of the bull, ran away and was chased by all the sixty thieves. When Jiha, who was hiding, was sure that the thieves were well away, he entered the cave, gave the old father another beating with the bull's tail, and took away the rest of the thieves' wealth. As the thieves could not catch Jiha's friend whom they had pursued for a long distance, they returned home only to find their father dying, and their booty gone. Jiha went home to his wife, proud of the fact that although he had lost the bull, he had gained riches which were a hundred times more valuable.

XVIII

Jiha had a lame donkey which made him an object of ridicule throughout the whole village, but particularly from one of his neighbours. Jiha

*857 539 decided to retaliate by ridiculing his neighbour and making a fool of him. So one day, he inserted five pieces of gold into his lame donkey's rectum, and took it to drink from the canal. After the donkey had drunk the water it defaecated, dropping the gold pieces, which had been inserted.[1] Then those who were around were astonished, and every one of them wanted to buy Jiha's donkey which defaecated gold, but Jiha preferred to sell it to his neighbour. The next day, the neighbour discovered that Jiha had deceived him, for the donkey did not defaecate any gold. Jiha's answer to this accusation was that the donkey became sterile owing to some black magic.

Some time later Jiha agreed with his wife to pretend to beat her, so much so that she would fall to the ground, feigning death; whereupon he would blow a whistle which would bring her to life again. Then, on hearing about this, everybody in the village wanted to buy Jiha's whistle, but he sold it to his neighbour. One day the neighbour was angry with his wife and beat her so thoroughly that she died. He then tried to bring her to life by blowing Jiha's whistle, but nothing happened. Raging with fury, the neighbour decided to kill Jiha, and so revenge himself. Anticipating this, Jiha pretended to be dead and was buried in a grave, taking a sharp razor with him. But the neighbour decided to get down into the grave to make sure that Jiha was really dead. As he was entering the grave, Jiha pulled him down into it and cut him to pieces with his razor, and in this way, Jiha triumphed over them all.

[1] For a psycho-analytical interpretation of symbols, the connection here between defaecation (faeces) and gold is worth noting.

Chapter Nine

ADOLESCENCE, SEX AND MARRIAGE

ADOLESCENCE as a stage of development in the individual's life 881
assumes but little importance, and is unmarked by a ceremony or any other means of social recognition. By the age of thirteen or fourteen the child's maturing of sex organs is referred to as 'bulough—maturation' (literally the stage when one reaches a peak). Adolescent boys are sometimes referred to as unmarried men (azab), or 'he whose sweat has become odorous', or 'he unto whom life has entered' (khashu al 'aish). For the parents, adolescent boys and girls do not present any 882
specific problems, except for the fact that they are approaching the marriageable age.

In the villagers' view, adolescence and marriage are inextricably con- 582
nected. It is not unusual for girls to get married by the age of twelve and thirteen, in spite of the law which stipulates that this may not be effected before the age of sixteen. This happens without official registration, and the reading of the 'Fatiha' between the two parties is sufficient to sanction [585]
and validate the marriage. Nowadays, boys usually marry after eighteen, on finishing the requirements and examination connected with military conscription, and it is one of the youths' misgivings against conscription [702]
that it delays their marriage, or at least provides a pretext for their parents for such a delay.

According to our way of approach, it is appropriate here to discuss the 882
dominant norms that are emphasized in the genetic development of the 183
individual at this stage. Most of these norms are not new but they loom larger in this stage, while other norms are still imperceptibly reinforced.

The first of these social norms is the emphasis on industry and responsibility of the maturing boys and girls. By the age of twelve or thirteen, 883
boys and girls are now, with few exceptions, out of school and Kuttab. 183
They could be entrusted to work either in the fields or at home without parental supervision, thus becoming a decided economic asset. Participating in adult work, with full responsibility, provides the adolescents on their part with a secure position in the family.[1]

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[1] For examples of such responsible tasks, see Chapter I.

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882 With this increasing share of responsibility, boys enjoy a certain amount of freedom as compared with their period of childhood. They are not exposed to the physical punishment which is frequently administered during childhood, except, of course, for grave offences such as stealing or neglect of their work. They are also entitled to move about freely and to mix with their age-mates without having to account for their absence at night to their parents. They can sleep outside the house in the open air in summer, or in the guest house in winter, or go to enjoy themselves at a wedding or any other ceremony.

Yet, while youths enjoy more freedom of movement concomitant with
their assumed responsibilities, girls find their freedom more restricted
and become more confined to the house and the neighbourhood. These
restrictions are partly because their work is more concentrated in the
[826] house, and partly 'because their breasts have grown', a sign of embarrassment and shame which the girls should not be encouraged to display.

Both boys and girls, however, are expected to give up their childish
883 play and games. One can observe groups of adolescents at night sitting at a corner of the street or in an open space, talking or telling stories or riddles, while the group of younger boys are noisily at their games. If girls still make dolls at this stage, they are not those made of maize straw for play, but those to decorate their future houses, and are made of cloth.

Although the boys' freedom is in some ways less restricted than that of
882 the girls, it does not mean that it is considerably increased. Both still have to maintain their social space and to observe the social norms of dominance-submission which govern the pattern of relationship between old and young; both have to adhere to rules governing sex behaviour and sex dichotomy as will be shown later. On the whole the arc of growing up seems to be similar to that in Japan, represented as a curve with maximum freedom and indulgence allowed to babies and to the very old. Social disciplines are imposed after infancy, reaching the lowest point in the curve of freedom just before marriage, whereupon it gradually ascends.
885 Marriage gives the individual a certain amount of freedom which gradually
581 increases by having children, and later on by possessing property after the
death of the father. On the other hand, old age, like infancy, is unham-
888 pered by some restrictions connected with etiquette, sexual shame, breaking wind, or covering the face—in the case of women. Old women, for
[291] instance, can go out wearing one black garment similar to children, and
unlike adolescent girls, who usually wear two pieces. Old men are allowed
to indulge in singing, which is different from that of the adolescents and
which is called 'nameem' or 'wawat'. Children are allowed to amuse them-
857 selves by mimicking or imitating old people and earn admiration from their parents or other boys for such imitation.[1]

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[1] Talking about the 'arc of life' in Japan, Ruth Benedict contrasts it with the 'American
882 arc of life'. In the latter case, to secure the individual's energetic participation in life, the Americans rely on increasing his freedom of choice during adolescence, while the

ADOLESCENCE, SEX AND MARRIAGE

882 183 Summing up the first dominant norm during the adolescent stage, one finds that boys and girls accept responsibility for active work and are characterized by the elimination of play elements compared with childhood and submission to parental authority as an ennobling virtue.

883 By the age of sixteen or seventeen the adolescent boys toe the line of adults, who reluctantly allow children to play their games or tell stories, provided they are assured of their victory in due course. The age-group of adolescents is interested in real issues and happenings of the village, e.g. disputes, ceremonies, neighbours' gossip, the new camel or bull that so-and-so bought, things that their families sell or buy in the market, the times of sowing and harvesting. Even in their interest in stories, it is the Jiha type[4] of story with its realistic touch, and those of life or miraculous feats of saints rather than the fables that interest them.

882 [183] 831 882 The attitudes towards sex represent the second norm that becomes dominant in the individual's life at this stage. It is true that sex segregation of children in play, the boys' abandoning of their earrings (while girls keep them), starts earlier, at the age of nine and ten years, but it is almost fully established by the age of twelve and thirteen.[1]

[514] [834] Sex organs now become pudenda and adolescents become careful about the way they sit or what they wear. The notion of shame (Ar) is primarily a word connoting sex disgrace or sexual infidelity. This is the first association that arises in the villager's mind, and has been extended to comprise 'every forbidden impropriety, from a trifling breach of etiquette to the most serious moral turpitude'.[2] The first real emotional feeling of what it means to bring 'ar' to one's family comes through the excessive shame connected with sex organs. Adolescent boys urinate out of sight, while the girls make use of a private room inside the house. Boys wear long pants, whereas girls wear a headcloth to cover part of their face and their breasts on passing by men.[3] For both, any conversation about sex is taboo, and they are forbidden to talk about it to their parents or to any grown-up. Chastity as a moral and religious ideal implies the avoidance of any stimulating pleasurable influence from the opposite sex, or talking about sex. Adolescent girls are not encouraged to look attractive for fear of tempting

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Japanese rely on maximizing the restraints upon him. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, p. 254. This generalization applies, on the whole, to the methods of socializhtion in Silwa. [882]

[1] I noticed that some boys and girls in their free drawings used to draw a line between men and women in a wedding ceremony or a pilgrims' procession. In the Rorschach testing the contrast between the two sexes was expressed in phrases such as 'These are women wearing black and these are men wearing white' although there was nothing in the blot to match statements like this.

[2] W. Robertson Smith, *Lectures and Essays*, London, 1912, p. 156. This word 'ar is different from 'L'ar' or 'al'ard' as pronounced in Silwa which means 'protection' and is said to invoke the help of another person. See E. Westermarck, 'L'ar or the Transference of Conditional Curses in Morocco', in *Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor*, Oxford, 1907.

[3] I was told that neither women nor adolescent girls wear any special clothes for menstruation. [841]

[4] [For examples, see category 183 116, pp. 179-183--analyst]

882 men. One woman told me that a girl who beautifies herself will find
831 difficulty in marriage and will have no 'lamah' (halo) about her to please
[834] her husband when married.

During adolescence, however, the girl would be prepared for marriage
882 by tattooing her lower lip and by a special mode of hair style, distinguish-
304 able from the loose hanging hair of childhood. For tattooing the lip, a
[302] special woman is invited to prick the lip with a pack of needles smeared in black soot mixed with animal bile. The hair dressing of an adolescent girl and a woman is very much like that among the Sudanese women.[1] A special woman called 'mashata' plaits the hair into small tresses tightly covering the head. This style of hair makes a firm basis for fixing her
[301] ornaments on marriage, which are usually composed of three golden disks (dinar, pl. dananeer) that dangle over the forehead, and a silver chain connected to the ends of the hair at the back.

883 It is during adolescence also that boys show the greatest interest in
539 singing, and for this purpose they form the so-called 'circle of romance
533 boys' (awlad al hawa). In these circles, held usually in summer, on festive occasions, weddings and circumcision, youths give vent to their new interest in love. They perform by standing in a circle with one taking the lead by singing a song while the other boys listen. On finishing, they repeat in chorus the last line again and again, clapping their hands rhythmically till the first singer or another youth starts another song. Some of these songs are composed extemporaneously, while others are old ones repeated. The following three examples are typical of the songs sung:

Ya bit ya um ghawaish,
khallaiti 'agli taish,
nassaitini al ma'aish,
Chorus: Wi dmoui 'al'ashik 'al khaddain.

O thou girl with bracelets,
thou hast rendered my mind crazy,
and hast made me neglect my work.
Chorus: And the tears of the lover are on the cheeks.

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Rakbah min foag wasil,
tihki bil hasil,
mafeesh adab wasil.
Chorus: 'Ala annabi wahhid wi salli.

She is on the top (on the roof),
telling what has happened,
she has no politeness at all.
Chorus: Say God is one and pray for the Prophet.

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[1] Cf. Sophie Zenovsky, 'Marriage Customs in Omdurman', in *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXVI, Part ii, 1945, p. 244.

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Wana jayi mna al Mas'aeed, 539
wi labis talat jalalaleeb, 533
wi batgallab baihin gilleeb.
Chorus: Gol la abouy in kunt tahwani, gol la abouy.

I was coming from al Masaeed (a neighbouring village)
wearing three garments
in which I was rolling, rolling.
Chorus: Tell my father if you love me, tell my father.

At this stage of adolescence, boys—especially those who have been to the Kuttab—begin to participate in mosque prayers and show intensified interest in religious practices. They go to Friday prayers, take part in the calling for prayers and the drawing of water from the mosque well for ablutions. A great number of youths also join the mystic order of 'Nakshabandia'; they are called 'Boys of the Path' (awlad attarik), and their headquarters is a room attached to the old mosque of the village. Members of the sect are expected to attend the night prayers ('isha) in the mosque, after which they congregate for reading and listening to mystic verses, followed by telling some of God's attributes silently several times. This is called 'the mystic routine' (ratib). Moreover, on certain occasions, these youths perform collectively the 'Zikr'. The performance of this mystic ritual involves mainly the repetitive uttering of some of God's attributes aloud and in unison. The leader of the 'Zikr', a blind man, stands in the middle of a circle, while youths, and sometimes with them a few married men, will be standing in a circle calling out together one of God's names, e.g. 'Merciful' (Raheem), while swaying their bodies. This repetition may go on for about a quarter of an hour or so, to be stopped by the leader who will recite some verses of saints or some 'mawwals'. While the boys are listening to this, they express their approval and admiration, and they may ask for another 'mawwal' from the reciter before they start chanting another of God's names. While those in the circle are repeatedly chanting a name of God, gradually getting into almost a state of ecstasy, the leader in the centre would be clapping his hands and stimulating his boys to carry on by more repetitive chanting. The following are two examples of 'mawwals' sung on such occasions:

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'Ajaby 'ala welaid fi zikr al-Ilah zawwad, 883 539 533
elif al-Jalalah, wib salaat annabi t'awwad.
'Ash gadr ma'ash la mal wa la hawwad,
wa la umru jalas yoam ma'ally galbahum sawwad,
lamma mat bayyan karamat la 'affan wa la dawwad.

I admire the boy who has indulged in mentioning God's name,
and accustomed himself to His Glorious name and to prayers for the
Prophet,

883 and lived all his time never deviating from the right path,
539 and never associating with those people whose hearts have been blackened.
533 When he died he showed signs of piety, and his body neither decayed, nor was attacked by worms.

. . . . .

Shams al giyama danat gum ya mureed safir,
gum jahhiz azzad min gabl al-miaad safir,
wi gabbad al-arwah daiman al-'ibad safir,
as-shaib wiyya as-sigam ju lak ya fata mursal.
wi likul umnah ata liha nabi mursal,
ata Jibril bil burag li annabi mursal.

The sun of resurrection is approaching, a warning for departure.
Prepare yourself before the hour comes.
The seizer of souls is always apparent and about.
Grey hairs and sickness are messengers for you.
For every nation there has been a messenger,
and Gabriel delivered God's message to Muhammad.

883 794 628 On some occasions these 'Boys of the Path' go to visit their 'brothers' in another village. On their approaching that village, the heralding of which would be by the visitors' chanting in unison popular verses and by beating on a small drum, the latter would walk out to receive them before they enter the village. They would offer them tea and dates and spend the rest of the night reciting verses or holding a 'zikr'.

Some of the adolescents and youths in the village do not take part in either the singing or mystic activities, for they are not encouraged to do so by their parents, and they are satisfied by only gathering in the neighbourhood for chatting. On asking some of these boys why they did not join in such activities, they replied that they wanted to attend to their livelihood, and as they usually felt tired through the day's work they could spare no time or effort for such activities.

869 It must be pointed out that it is not maintained here that interest in religious matters is a psychological consequence of puberty and adolescence, or that the attitude towards sex is being learnt only at this stage. Such norms as mentioned earlier are being imbibed gradually from childhood. With regard to religious matters, children start by learning about God's power at an early stage, even in their play and riddles. On going to the Kuttab they know how to recite the major Islamic creed, 'There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet', learn the obligation of fasting through the adult practice and through their own attempts to fast half a day, a day or more according to their capacity in imitation of
867 adults. As far as sex norms are concerned, they begin to express themselves in separate play as early as the age of eight and nine years. But with the
882 dawning of adolescence, the child finds himself awakened to the cumulative

effect of social learning and to an intensified understanding of the social meaning of maturity. Looking at adolescence as a stage of social development and social experience, it does not differ markedly from the stages of childhood.[1] With the increase in the physical and mental capacities of the growing boy or girl, he or she is expected to have fully mastered the skills and faithfully observed the social norms and attitudes which he or she has hitherto been imbibing and practising. What Fortes observed in the process of socialization in Taleland applies almost equally to this peasant community where the total pattern of behaviour is not built up bit by bit, through addition, but evolves from the embryonic form in an almost concentric pattern of development.[2] In this way the norms of development are increasingly reinforced and intensified through institutional and social learning. Moreover, with the comparatively slow pace of change, the adolescent develops a sense of cultural assurance since he sees others going through experiences culturally similar to his own.[3]

At this juncture it is appropriate to mention that in some communities characterized by continuity of social training combined with lax and even social disciplines, the period of adolescence does not witness emotional stress and turmoil which hitherto have been considered as inevitable characteristics of this phase of development.[4] Moreover, recent investigations among adolescents in Western communities have shown that such symptoms of stress and ferment are absent amongst boys and girls who have been reared in favourable conditions; and the conclusion is that appearance of such traits is neither an inevitable accompaniment of the adolescent stage nor an inescapable consequence of the maturing of certain animal-like instincts.[5]

Some psychologists and especially Freudian analysts maintain that the biological changes in adolescence have a great impact on the individual's behaviour.[6] This is one extreme, while the other is to consider adolescence as purely a sociological phenomenon and merely a social experience involving new adjustments to social situations and relationships. Here adolescence is to be considered as a bio-social phenomenon, dependent on the cultural conditioning of the individual with regard to his maturing sex

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[1] M. Mead, 'Coming of Age in Samoa'; Reuter, Foster and Mead, 'Sociological Research in Adolescence', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLII, 1936, 1937, pp. 81–94.

[2] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, pp. 42–3.

[3] M. Mead, 'Character Formation and Diachronic Theory' in *Social Structure—Essays Presented to Radcliffe Brown*, p. 22.

[4] M. Fortes, op. cit., — M. Mead, 'Adolescence in Primitive and Modern Societies', in *Readings in Social Psychology*, ed. by T. M. Newcombe and E. L. Hartley, New York, 1947.

[5] C. M. Fleming, *Adolescence*, London, 1949, pp. 240–2.

[6] Wayne Dennis, 'The Adolescent', in Carmichael, *Manual of Child Psychology*, pp. 636–7. He maintains that adolescence originally had a meaning which was biological, and not temporal or social. Hence studies concerning the psychology of adolescence must concern themselves with the effects of the biological process on the behaviour of the individual and their main aim therefore is an examination of a certain set of mental-physical correlations.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
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Silwa

882 functions and the impact of this standardization on the basic personality structure and social institutions.[1] In the light of this statement, the social disciplines connected with sexuality are relevant data, and according to Kardiner, of great significance in understanding the basic personality structure and in explaining partly the nature of primary institutions.

It seems that in Silwa the process of socialization is similar in many points to that amongst the Tallensi and the Samoans, with regard to the continuity of the inculcated social norms and the spheres of adult and child activities.[2] Unlike many Western societies, youth in Silwa do not express in their attitudes that sense of being torn between youthful autonomy and parental insistence on dependence. This problem does not seem to be disturbing to parents and would seem abhorrent to youth who like to demonstrate their allegiance to their family and clan. Even if such desire for autonomy is occasionally expressed by boys, who on disagreement with their parents desert them for some relatives in another village or go to town to work, this is considered to be the exception, and of course such a desertion can never be entertained by girls. The lack of such strong desire could be explained by the security the youth derives from his status in his family and his need to be married by his parents.

Psychologically, however, adolescent boys, and more so adolescent [157] girls, impressed the writer as being on the whole timid, apprehensive and withdrawn. These traits stand out more clearly if compared with children's groups. Attitudes of initiative, self-assertion and drive seem to be the exception in adolescent behaviour.[3] In attempting to account for such general characteristics, the writer does not claim them to be the negative phase of the adolescent stage. He attributes their striking appearance to the cumulative effect of the severe social disciplines, and especially those connected with sex. The maturing of sex functions at this stage is noted [831] with great embarrassment, shame and feeling of guilt by adolescents. As mentioned before, complete hush and excessive secrecy prevails over sexual matters among adolescents as well as adults. This seems to contrast sharply with free bodily gratification given to the infants. There is no word for masturbation in the villagers' dialect. Sexual pleasure of any kind outside the marriage tie is condemned by the text of the Koran, as mentioned earlier.

[834] Manifestations of this excessive repression and fear of sex are obvious in the veiling of adolescent girls and women and the hiding of the breast

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[1] Richard T. Sollinberger, 'The Concept of Adolescence', in *The Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 36, 1939, pp. 600–1. A. Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*.

[2] For adolescence and puberty as treated in different societies, see also Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, Chapter II.

[3] This is the writer's general impression and could only be substantiated by comprehensive recording of the behaviour of adolescents. According to Fortes, however, 'for most problems of social anthropology, variations are of minor importance as compared with the "typical". For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost importance.' *Patterns of Culture*, p. 8.

contours with extra pieces of cloth, in the downcast look of boys when 882 speaking to an adult, a well-known characteristic of this stage of development. 834 The writer also noticed on many occasions adolescent boys who were either enraged or ashamed on seeing their mother sitting with relatives outside the house at night, others who threw dust at their adolescent sisters and even married sisters when looking outside the house without proper covering, even when no man was passing by. When sisters become 'a shame' in the matter of going out fetching water or running errands, adolescent boys do not object to taking over some of these duties.[1] The writer also noticed an adolescent boy who, rebuked by his mother on the grounds of his 'mature age' and 'the smell of his pubic hair', flared up with rage and wept. This may be an extreme case, but it is indicative of the excessive shame and apprehension connected with sex. Obviously [831] girls have not much scope for venting the pressures of sexual repressions, [154] and they become more sullen and apprehensive than the boys, but not for long, as they are soon to get married. This excessively repressive and restrictive discipline over sex marks out the process of growing up in this community under study from Taleland and Samoa, where the attitude towards sex is much more permissive.

At this juncture it is appropriate to apply Kardiner's constructs con- 155 cerning the effect on the basic personality structure of the way a culture satisfies the individual's dependency cravings, which are biologically determined. It seems that this excessive prohibition on sexuality at the stage of adolescence is a social discipline imposed to create and perpetuate the attitude of timidity and dependence of the growing individuals on their seniors. To obey such a discipline is a method of ingratiation, and of establishing conditions for being loved, protected and socially accepted. Thus it works as a lever which parental authority manipulates to make children acquiescent and dependent and as a social technique for minimizing initiative and ambition.[2] These exaggerated cravings of dependency and their concomitant consequences of the inflation of the parental image and social conformity probably explain the psychological undercurrents lying behind the great indifference to social change in this village as well as in many other similar communities in Egypt.

To what extent do inordinate sibling rivalry and excessive shame and [152]

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[1] See Appendix VIII, where one of the adolescent boys evinces his shame at his sister's growing breast.

[2] This is based on Kardiner's explanation that restrictive sex discipline creates instead of a friendly attitude to the impulse, one of anxiety which is in 'anticipation of danger'. 'Instead of the self-confidence and the idea "I can get pleasure by and from myself", there appears an exaggerated idea of the cruelty of the forbidding parent. Instead of the attitude of self-confidence, the opposite develops—a lack of it, together with an inordinate increase in dependency and timidity.' He further maintains that interference with sexual development creates exaggerated dependency, the inflation of the parental image, an overvaluation of the boons of dependency, and the encouragement of secondary outlets for the repressed hostility to the interfering disciplinarian. *The Individual and His Society*, p. 28.

155 guilt, especially with regard to sex, produce the psychological disposition
152 to sexual jealousy institutionalized in this community as well as in many
other communities in rural Egypt? It is well known that in Egypt disputes
over land, water and women rank as three of the most common causes
[674] of crime.[1] This does not mean that sibling rivalry and sex prohibitions
are the only causes, but seem to provide the psychological field for the
moral and religious values connected with fidelity and the propriety of
sexual jealousy. A woman is identified not only with 'shame' but also
with 'honour' and to preserve one's honour is tantamount to avoid exposure to shame.[2]

These attitudes, according to Kardiner, would also help to understand
the dichotomy of sexes and to prevent sexual jealousies from coming out
to open hostilities. They also appear to be one of the weapons of social
[182] equilibrium and of preserving in-male and in-female solidarity.[3]

Here it is also possible to give some satisfactory answer to the connec-
577 tion between the nature of the community and its demands on individuals
as represented by sexual regulations. The central and principal quality
in a polite (muaddab) or virtuous person is his conformity to the norms
governing sexual behaviour; the flouting of which in any manner would
condemn him as impolite and vicious irrespective of his other qualities.
Morality and virtue are primarily connected with stringent sexual controls. The villagers, although envying the city dwellers their material
comfort, deplore their moral laxity, e.g. women's emancipation in dress,
love affairs, use of cosmetics, women's participation in men's work. In this
[837] community I heard of no cases of adultery or illegitimate children for the
[848] last thirty years, though cases of homosexuality and jokes about sexual
pleasure from animals are not uncommon amongst the adolescents and
[838] young men. Stringent sexual controls are an essential agent for the main-
[839] tenance of solidarity, the cohesion and the orderly living of a group with
its puritanic religious code and its social organization based, among other
things, on a clear-cut sex dichotomy.[4]

882 Whatever views may be held about the psychological problems con-
885 nected with adolescence in Silwa, this stage is certainly the prologue to
the full status of adulthood which is eventually attained by marriage.
Marriage, after circumcision, marks the greatest ceremonial occasion in
585 the individual's life. The best way of describing marriage conditions in
Silwa is to give an account of a marriage ceremony which the writer

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[1] Doreen Warriner, *Land and Poverty in the Middle East*, London, 1948.

[2] Cf. J. C. Flugel, *Men and their Motives*, London, 1943, and Ernest Jones, *Papers on Psycho-analysis*, where he writes: 'The ultimate source of the fear and guilt that lie behind all these reactions (of sexual jealousy) is the relationship to another potential man and it is derived from the boy's unconscious fixation on childish attitudes; it is hard for him to "picture" a woman quite apart from another man to whom she secretly belongs.' p. 483.

[3] A. Kardiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 476–7.

[4] See Margaret Read, 'The Moral Code of the Ngoni and their former Military State', in *Africa*, Vol. XI, 1938.

witnessed, and which is typical as there is hardly any variation in the form it takes. 585

A is a boy who had recently been rejected for military conscription, on grounds of poor eyesight; he is known to be a good farmer, and a great help to his father. He was the eldest son in the family and felt that his father delayed his marriage unduly as 'fathers usually get their first sons married as early as possible'. After he was rejected for conscription, this boy could no longer bear any delay. As the custom is, he sent 'messengers' to persuade his father to get him married, as 'everybody was telling him that it was high time he got married'. On the other hand, his father was reluctant; he was in a quandary whether or not to proceed with this project; he was apprehensive that the lad might not be so devoted to his work after marriage, yet he felt the time was ripe for getting his son married, otherwise the boy might at any time 'bring disgrace' on the family. The lad's last appeal to the father was through a messenger who pointed out to the father that if the necessary steps for marriage were not instantly undertaken, the boy might think of leaving the village to find some work elsewhere. The father gave his consent, realizing that he would have to get his son married: 'There will be more "baraka" if it is done soon.'[1] The actual preparations would start in a month's time, when the harvest was ready. 582 [102]

Now a dilemma of choice faced the parents, as there were two girls of marriageable age in the family; one was the daughter of the boy's maternal uncle and the other of the paternal uncle. It was partly because of the mother's influence, and partly because of the boy's personal inclinations that his parents decided to marry him to his maternal cousin. This affronted the boy's paternal uncle, as his daughter, according to custom, had precedence over that of the maternal uncle. This man asked the lad's father for an 'Arab verdict' on the matter, and a formal gathering of relatives and some neighbours brought apparent reconciliation between the two brothers. They all agreed that 'although the boy was to get married into his mother's family the oil was still preserved in the house (zaitakum fi baitakum) and that he was not marrying a stranger'. Yet this slight was not forgotten and caused some tension and vituperation between some of the paternal and maternal relatives during the celebration of the ceremony. [584] [578]

The date of writing the marriage contract was then fixed. The father of the boy and his relatives and friends went to the house of the girl's father asking for her hand for their son in the usual phrase of 'talbeen al gurb' (literally 'we desire to get closer to you'). Neither the boy nor the girl was present during this gathering for writing the contract. Before the contract was written, the registrar (maazoon)[2] enunciated the following, which was 584

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[1] This remark of the father indicated his social obligation for the marriage of his son; its counterpart is for the son to accept his father's arrangement for his marriage.

[2] The 'maazoon' is a learned man who keeps the official register of marriage and divorce. He is officially appointed after an examination in the Koran and the Sharia; it is an unpaid job. [629]

584 repeated by the girl's father: 'I have married my daughter X to Y accepting the payment on which the people of the two sides concerned have agreed in the manner prescribed by the Holy Book and the Way of the Prophet.' The contract was then signed by the two fathers as well as another
witness for each side.[1] This was followed by the reading of the 'Fatiha' and
[583] the giving of the marriage-payment (mahr) to the bride's father. In this
case the amount was ten pounds paid in advance and two pounds to be paid later. According to the village practice, the payment always consists of two parts; the greater part (usually three-quarters of the total) is paid over after writing the contract and is called 'mugaddam' (in advance),
[586] while the other, called 'muakhar' (the delayed), is only payable in case of
divorce. All these procedures in the ceremony described here were followed, as usual, by a specially prepared meal ending with the reading of the 'Fatiha' and a prayer to God that He might help in making this marriage successful and fruitful. While all this was taking place, the girl's mother and her female relatives, but not the boy's mother or his female relatives, were singing and uttering their joy-cries now and again. The 'maazoon' then left with his money gift from the bridegroom's father and sugar and corn from the bride's family. Thus the ceremony of 'agreement' (tibah) ended.

The agreement between the two families was followed by their fixing
[585] the 'night of marriage' (lailat addukhla), and this followed a fortnight
later.[2] In the meanwhile, the bridegroom took his weekly presents to the
[431] girl's house on the market day. These presents usually consist of meat,
sweets, fruit and similar delicacies. The girl's mother returned the handkerchief on the basket in which these gifts were sent with presents of pigeons and flour. During his visits in this period, the boy, as expected, was not allowed to see the girl, being usually met by the mother and father.
During this period also the girl's family were preparing her house and
[342] decorating it. They had to build an extra room, and thus the newly-weds'
apartment consisted of two rooms, one with a completely covered roof with only two small holes as windows, while the front room was half-covered. This is a typical way of building a house in Silwa, making the inner room for use in winter and the outer for summer. At the same time, the girl's family were getting together her jewellery, by buying bits and borrowing others.

000 The boy's family bought an outfit for the girl composed of two black

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[1] According to Islamic Law there must be two witnesses for each side to sanction the marriage. It must be noted here that the writing of the contract at this stage is not like an engagement; it is religiously binding as if actual marriage had taken place. If the bride or the bridegroom happens to die immediately after the contract, the surviving partner is entitled to have a share in any property.

[2] It literally means 'the night on which the bridegroom enters in unto the bride'. It must also be noted here that Moslems regard marriage as essentially a civil contract, the validity of which depends only on the agreement of both sides. See Westermarck, *Marriage Ceremonies in Morocco*, London, 1914.

The boy's family bought an outfit for the girl [composed of two black 584
outer garments (tobs) and two colourful patterned gallabiahs. Together [291]
with the girl's outfit, a tob and a gallabiah were bought for the mother and a gallabiah for each of the bride's younger brothers.

Two days before the actual night of marriage, the bridegroom and some of his male relatives and friends who were unmarried went around distributing invitations to those the family wished to invite. Those invited would be expected to contribute during the forthcoming ceremony of 'haircutting' as in case of circumcision ceremonies.

The appointed day arrived, and began with the female celebration in 585
the bridegroom's house. Women came with corn on their trays as their 431
contribution to the mother who, in return, placed on the tray a loaf of wheat bread or a part of it and a piece of meat according to the contribution received.[1] During this exchange of gifts which took place between the late morning and the late afternoon, the boy's house looked very busy, but with hardly any men about. Women were singing and calling out their joy-cries and exchanging the good wishes.

In the late afternoon the girl invited her friends for the jar-filling ritual. 585
Accompanied by four other girls the bride took her jar to the Nile, and on this occasion, as is the custom, she was allowed to linger as much as she liked on her journey to the Nile, provided she came back before sunset. [515]
On her arrival home she washed herself completely, was rubbed with henna and perfume by her mother and was wrapped in a woman's cover (twada), her face not being seen by anyone except her very close female relatives, e.g. mother, grandmother, maternal aunt.[2] She was then surrounded by a group of girls of her age who began entertaining her by playing on the tambourine, and singing the traditional songs of the occasion. The following is an example: [533]

> How pretty is the one we are entertaining,
> How we are admiring her.
> The snake in his hole
> has spent a sleepless night.
> He kept one eye on her forehead,
> and the other on her anklets.[3]

In the bridegroom's house there was the preparation for the procession round the village to take place before the evening prayer. The procession was led by some religious men beating on their drums and tambourines while chanting hymns of praise to the Prophet. On the way, and on arriving at the mosque, dates and sweets were distributed and children usually find such occasions most exciting when they scramble for their booty.

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[1] It was here that the boy's paternal uncle's wife and some of her friends had a row with ^A [578]
the boy's mother over what they ought to have received for their contribution.

[2] Even the father himself is not supposed to see her face.

[3] The snake is presumably the symbol of the husband, who has been admiring the girl from top to toe.

^A [See category 116, p. 193– 4 LYST 195]

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[P.196]

585 Behind this small gathering of men and a great crowd of children, followed the female procession crying out shrills and singing.

[431] After the evening prayer the bridegroom offered a meal to those who were in the procession, as well as others who were invited, after which contributions from men began to be received in the 'haircutting' ceremony. The details of announcement of contributions are exactly the same as those described earlier for the circumcision ceremony.[2] While the bridegroom or 'The Prince', as he is usually called on such an occasion, was [302] having his hair cut, the circle of 'the boys of romance'[3] was in full swing outside the house; other adolescent boys were engaged in mock fighting with their staves.

As the contribution ceremony ended, the crowd of boys stopped their organized playing and singing and showed signs of excitement and anticipation for the next event, when the bridegroom in his best clothes, a dagger tied to his waist and a stick in hand, had to go to meet the bride. Immediately the bridegroom came out of the house, another procession was organized. The procession was led by a strong youth taking a camel-load of wheat, corn, lentils and beans which was to be the bridegroom's provisions for three months. The bridegroom himself was amidst a group of his friends, who were reciting the traditional song of: 'O God, Praise our Prophet; our hearts love him because he will save us from Hell.' At the very rear came the procession of women, and the whole procession moved towards the bride's house.

As the singing and beating of the drums were heard by the bride's people, they came out with her, face and body covered, and in the care of her mother and the midwife, with another girl walking beside them carrying candles and corn on a tray on her head. Other women and girls were following in a state of great excitement. When the two processions met, the midwife took the bride to the bridegroom. On her face being uncovered to see him, he was prepared to sprinkle her face with some milk which he had in his mouth and would expel with force.[1] At this moment the excitement reached its peak as the boys around the bridegroom sang at the top of their voices, 'The roses are blossoming. She is rightfully thine, she is rightfully thine.'[2]

[578] The tension between the bridegroom's maternal and paternal relations reached its highest a short time later when the traditional mock fight began over the loaded camel. This fight usually takes place just in front of the bride's house, where some boys belonging to the bridegroom's family try to take the camel back to where it came from, while other boys from the bride's family try to prevent them from doing so and lead the camel to

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[1] It is by no means the first time the bride and bridegroom saw each other, which might be inferred from such a ritual.

[2] It is one of the signs of a 'good man' not to show any signs of embarrassment, and to be able to aim the milk right at the bride's face, otherwise he would be chaffed about it. [578] On this occasion, although the bridegroom did this job properly, he was not spared some criticism especially from those who were in favour of a marriage with his paternal cousin.

[2] [See category 116, p. 117 -- analyst]

[3] [See category 116, p. 186 -- analyst]

its destination. Each of the two sides call out, 'The camel is ours, the camel [585]
is ours'. On this occasion, the fight took on a serious note, the camel became frightened, and some grown-ups had to intervene to prevent further [578]
developments. After the camel had safely entered the homestead, the two processions, mostly of women and boys by now, proceeded to an elevated piece of ground to let the bride and bridegroom, who were still in their separate groups, see the Nile from a distance. All then returned to the bride's house. The bridegroom with his selected friends, mostly unmarried, retired to the house built for him, while the bride stayed with her mother and other female relatives. The bridegroom remained with his friends till the morning, for according to custom he does not sleep with his wife till the fourth night.

On his first breakfast, however, the bridegroom with his friends were
served, as usual, with special wheat-cakes called in the villagers' language [262]
'kaak', with rice pudding and tea, for which the bridegroom paid a pound in return. After breakfast the 'Prince' and his associates went to kiss the hands of his father, mother and greet other relatives in his patrilineal house. This was followed by a visit to the clan's guest house, where [514]
they received pots of tea from the father's house as well as from neighbours of the family. Meanwhile the bridegroom's mother received her breakfast from her in-laws to which her answer was a visit accompanied by other women taking back the trays full of corn.

For the next two days the bridegroom was still accompanied by his selected friends, who shared his meals and remained at night with him. On the fourth night he was left alone to see his wife after dinner. Before he retired with her he had to offer her a pound as a 'placation' (ridwa) for her disrobing. On the following morning the boy brought a ram from his
father's house for a special lunch to which this time only neighbours were [431]
invited; these also made gifts of money, sugar and tea, as their contributions.[1] Thus, through these elaborate procedures of exchanging food and
gifts, the bridegroom establishes himself in his matrilocal residence amidst [591]
his neighbours and the new marriage is thus publicly declared and acknowledged.

At the end of the week, the bridegroom's mother with some of her friends went to visit her son's house, a ceremony called the 'treading of the house', since she actually went to see the rooms prepared for her son for the first
time. The other women who were invited or who were fulfilling their
obligations carried their own contribution of wheat flour, pigeons and [431]
money to be given to the bride's mother. These contributions would be considered as part of the bridegroom's provisions and measured out by the mother-in-law. The mother-in-law provided them with lunch and tea, thus marking the end of the wedding celebrations. 585

The end of the marriage celebrations marks the beginning of a formal 606
avoidance between the bridegroom and his parents-in-law. Whatever

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[1] This meal takes place even if the bridegroom is married to a girl living across the road.

585 606 might have been the relations between him and them before marriage, the newly created situation makes him no longer on familiar social terms with them. Traditionally, to remove this 'avoidance' the bridegroom's family should send within the first two months of marriage a ram to the bride's family as a 'reconciliation'.[1]

This avoidance could be regarded as a recognition that, in the initial stages of marriage, much of the behaviour of the married man to the family of his spouse has to be modified and reoriented. Even if he is married to his cousin, avoidance of her parents is required as a token of respect. Adoption of new phrases in reference to his in-laws, house habits of reserve, announcing his entrance into the house, manner of dress and similar items of etiquette must be observed by the newly married groom. In other words, previous informality and intimacy are replaced by a degree of formality to show consideration for the new ties of marriage.

[591] This avoidance could also be considered as a manifestation that the husband, living in his matrilocal residence, feels uneasy and embarrassed in the home of a comparatively alien family; his ultimate home will be his patrilineal house to which he eventually takes his wife.[2] This custom also implies the psychological stresses involved in the new situation, where it is difficult to render the demands of consanguinity and affinity compatible, and where the support of the larger family unit has to be sustained for the maintenance of the newly created bonds of the individual family.[3]

Nadel explains such an avoidance in a similar manner. He maintains that in such a situation spontaneous shame and conventionalized sexual shame appear combined; for these cultural features express (and prevent) both the embarrassment between strangers (in a kinship sense) who are thrown together by marriage, and the embarrassment that springs from the awareness of the sexual occasion responsible for this new relationship.[4]

Such social procedures are implicit cultural solutions for smoothing transition from one state of life to another requiring concomitant adjustment and reorganization.

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[1] Although avoidance between bridegroom and parents-in-law is still strictly observed, the breaking away from it does not necessarily have to be achieved through a gift of a 'slaughter', but occurs quite often nowadays through the exigencies of everyday life after the lapse of some time. [178]

[2] This is the ideal course to be taken, but, as mentioned earlier, other factors, e.g. lack of space in his father's house, the bride's parents' attachment to their daughter and her children, might keep the husband in his matrilocal residence for years.

[3] This explanation is based on a similar situation referred to by R. Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, p. 343. This avoidance lends itself to psycho-analytical interpretation in terms of incestuous taboo. The uneasiness in the newly created situation could also be inferred from the 'mock fight' which could be classified, according to Van Gennep, as one of the 'rites de separation', while exchange of gifts and the partaking of food would fall in the category of 'rites d'agrégation'. Cf. Van Gennep, *Les Rites de Passage*, p. 198.

[4] S. F. Nadel, *Foundations of Social Anthropology*, p. 352. The psycho-analytical interpretation for such a taboo, according to Roheim, is that in this way an attempt is made to separate the wife from the mother, genitality from orality, and infantile dependency. *Psycho-analysis and Anthropology*, p. 425.

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171 In Artas, the Palestinian village studied by Granqvist, the uneasiness in this stage of adjustment presents itself in a different way. As marriage in Artas is in the patrilocal residence, the bride, before leaving her family, would make demands on the bridegroom's family and make sure that her family's wishes have been fulfilled, before she is placed on the camel going to her bridegroom's house.[1]

585 593 As for the bride, she now starts her seclusion in the house till she brings forth a child and is never allowed to go out and never seen by a married man, even her husband's father and her married brothers. Her main job is to attend to her husband, to receive him when he knocks at the door, and to serve food to him. One of the main difficulties of newly married girls is their adjustment to the new situation, where they must break away from their previous life and assume a responsible role. The difficulties, however, are smoothed out in the matrilocal marriage period, where the bride's [606] mother is really the one who, behind the scenes, provides her son-in-law with his requirements. This attention of the mother to her son-in-law usually makes her unmarried sons and daughters jealous, as epitomized in the common saying referred to earlier. Under her mother's supervision and instructions, the bride comes to learn the appropriate conduct of womanhood. It is probably during this period that she receives sex information as the occasion arises. Moreover, her previous playmates do not sever their contacts with her; they still go to see her and 'have a hand dip of henna' with her; but she is not allowed to join their games or play with 'toys'. Other women, especially relatives, come to see her, give her advice and praise her 'halo' and jewellery. On the whole it seems that the girl comes under her mother's authority at this stage more than any other stage of her development. During this period of seclusion the direct influence of the mother is undoubtedly supreme, even much more than the husband. The latter, in fact, is not expected to linger in his bride's house. Except for his mealtimes, he should not remain in the house except when he comes in late at night after finishing his entertainments with his friends.

586 593 Indeed, the first year of marriage, for both the husband and wife, bristles with difficulties that may lead to divorce. According to my informant, Mahmoud, marriages are more prone to break down during the first year than at any later period. This statement seems plausible, since during the first year especially, the economic, social and psychological adjustments or maladjustments not only between the spouses, but also between their families, develop.[2] The amount of talk, gossip and vitupera-

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[1] Hilma Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village*, Vol. II, Helsingfors, 1935, p. 72.

[2] For a well-documented discussion on the economic, social and psychological factors curbing the Moslem's nominal freedom of divorce, see Hilma Granqvist, *op. cit.*, Chapter X. According to official statistics the ratio of divorce per thousand of the population of Egypt for the five years between 1942 and 1946 was 8·3, 9·2, 9·6, 8·9, 8·1 respectively. *Pocket Census of 1948*, Govt. Press, Cairo, 1950, p. 47 (in Arabic).

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586 586 593 tion, especially amongst the womenfolk, might appear tragi-comic when they harp endlessly upon the shortcomings of the spouses, and their respective families. Complaints and gossip are heard about things such as the inability to provide the right amount of henna for the bride; or the bride's family's bad cooking of the groom's pigeons; the quality of the girl's jewellery and endless small things which reveal the difficulties of the adjustments of the individual family to an equally important wider circle of the joint family.

586 The following table shows that the percentages of divorce for the whole country reach their highest during the first two years of marriage.

TABLE IV

Relation between divorce and the duration of marriage between 1942 and 1946 in Egypt

Duration of marriage	1942 %	1943 %	1944 %	1945 %	1946 %
Less than a month	4·20	4·31	4·46	3·88	3·99
One–six months	14·60	15·70	16·30	14·50	14·20
Six months–one year	12·50	13·10	14·40	14·60	13·05
One–two years	18·4	18·10	20·90	20·30	20·30
Two–three years	11·0	11·90	13·60	14·50	13·70
Three–four years	7·55	9·05	8·34	7·82	8·60
Four–five years	5·80	4·87	5·04	5·53	5·40
Five–ten years	15·30	13·10	13·70	12·30	11·90
Ten–fifteen years	5·42	5·23	5·10	4·63	4·74
Fifteen–twenty years	2·42	2·40	2·32	2·12	2·00
Twenty years and more	2·78	2·66	2·38	2·09	2·12[1]

Here a short note on divorce seems necessary. The right and power to divorce one's wife is part of the male ethos in this community. According to Moslem law (Sharia) a man can divorce his wife twice and on both occasions can take her back. If he repeats any formula of divorce three times or says, 'You are divorced threefold' (talga bi attalati), then the divorce is final; and husband and wife can only remarry on certain conditions.[2] Recently, in Egypt, the threefold formula of divorce has come to be regarded as one statement, and husband and wife can reunite immediately after its utterance if they wish.

The word 'divorce' is also used as a conditional oath by men to convince others of the truth of a statement, or to force them to accept an offer or conform to a desire.[3]

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[1] These percentages are worked out from the *Pocket Census of 1948*, Govt. Press, Cairo, 1950, p. 50 (in Arabic).

[2] Cf. S. G. Fitzgerald, *Muhammadan Law*.

[3] Hilma Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village*, pp. 297–8.

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The following table shows the percentages of monogamous and polygamous marriages among the Moslem population in the country as a whole. 595

TABLE V

Percentage of monogamous and polygamous marriages

Number of wives	1927	1937
One wife	95·18	96·86
Two wives	4·49	2·95
Three wives	0·29	0·17
Four wives	0·04	0·02[1]

585 83 562 What does it feel like to be a newly married bride, confined to her house, with the occasional temptations of stealing a peep through the holes of the door onto the outside world? What is her complex emotion on seeing her husband returning home or while serving him, washing his hands, watching him eat, etc.? Does she fear her first sexual experience? Does her husband show an affection towards the girl in sexual intercourse? Are other erogenous zones used in sex? What are the overtones of small talk, if any, between husband and wife in the midst of the recurrent experiences of sexual intercourse which is one of the great pleasures in such a culture?[2] Such issues are significant to a study of the factors influencing the interaction of culture and personality. The writer cannot claim to give any substantial answer to such questions as the whole issue is taboo and it would be impossible for a person who is normally part of this culture to raise such points without endangering his prestige. [123]

885 By getting married, the bridegroom and bride have achieved the hallmark of adulthood; and this brings satisfaction to one's parents. The transfer of the wife to the patrilocal residence is usually thought of after she bears a child, and by then her mother prepares for her a special head-cover (tawada) to enable her to go out. The wife's settlement in her husband's house does not end her connection with her family, as it is her father's home which is always opened for her as a safeguard against any maltreatment from her husband or other members of his family.[3] 591 [593]

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[1] *Pocket Census of 1948*, p. 12.

[2] It is a well-known fact that some newly wed husbands become impotent during their first sexual experiences and are usually then called tied (marbout). In such cases, a religious man would be invited to read for him, or write a charm which he wears under his clothes. Sometimes when this fact is known, a friend of this married man would go and tell him that he has 'tied' him; and for this the friend would invite the husband to a meal of pigeons. [833]

[3] When a wife forsakes her husband's home for her father's she is known as 'hardani', and mediators or an Arab council would try to reconciliate the two sides. For a similar situation see Hilma Granqvist, *op. cit.*, pp. 225–32. [586]

Chapter Ten

INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

121 It has been pointed out by some anthropologists that in homogeneous primitive societies, the attention is focused more on the desirability of learning over against the desirability of teaching.[1] As the cultural alternatives are so limited in such communities, the individual finds himself learning the accepted skills, habits and attitudes which everyone else agrees that he would wish to learn. The desirability of learning the socially acceptable modes of living is contrasted, on the whole, with modern societies where individuals are taught various things on which there is no consensus of agreement that everyone has a desire to know. This distinction between folk and modern societies reflected in the different methods of learning and teaching is, of course, not an absolute distinction. For instance, in folk communities teaching does take place, e.g. in certain ceremonies, in the constant corrections and admonitions to children, and so on; and learning does take place in modern societies in the family and group situations.

876 In folk communities in general, the educative process, whether through learning or teaching, is coterminous with life, and none of its situations is deliberately singled out or isolated for drill or special training.[2] In Silwa the popular saying tends to confirm that the desire to learn is preferable to the need of being taught: 'If the boy does not learn, time will teach him the hard way.' This is also in line with the traditions of Moslem society, where people have been expected to seek knowledge as 'knowledge does not seek people'. Whether in search of special skills or religious enlightenment, the master did not go seeking pupils, but rather the converse. In the Arabic language the word for pupil or student (talib) literally means 'the searcher', he who requests and requires knowledge.

212 It should also be pointed out here that folk life in Silwa has been relatively independent of the influence of the written word, and it has been affected by it only through a small number of people who were considered

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[1] Margaret Mead, 'Our Educational Emphases in Primitive Perspective', in *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVIII, 1943, p. 634.

[2] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 27.

to be specialists in transmitting to others the religious knowledge of the 876
Holy Book and the pious ancestors. The oral means of communicating and [212]
committing to memory the accumulated experiences is the best guide for
perpetuating the group's tradition. It is not surprising, then, that old [828]
people are considered as knowing more than the young, and that, on these
grounds, they are worthy of respect and obedience. The young have to 561
wait many years before they can wield the same prestige and authority, 554
for the instruments of wisdom may only be acquired through the passage of time. It is not unusual to hear people who wish to assert their position or to impress others with their views saying: 'I am a man who has witnessed both the pre-Islamic (jahiliya) and Islamic eras.'[1]

Good memory is certainly a great asset and indeed highly valued in 828
Silwa, and the person with a good memory is usually described as the one
with 'the full head'. The ability to remember names, places, events, and [554]
genealogies enhances the person's popularity and makes his participation
and consultation desirable in social activities. The emphasis on memory
training is impressed on the child as early as its efforts to learn to talk. [861]
Mothers utter a few words for the child to repeat, and then ask it to go
round to all those who may be present, and say these words to each in
turn, and this is recognized as the best method for the teaching of language.
One of the favourite amusements of adults with children is to test the latter [519]
in reciting the names of their families in genealogical order. Very frequently, however, the adults may purposely interject incorrect names to mislead the children. Some children between the age of three and four, on being asked by the writer to recite their family names, would tell him as many as four or five of their names (the first name, followed by the
father's name, the grandfather's, the great-grandfather's and so on).[2] In
a symbolical way, the mother encourages the child to eat pigeon's head, [825]
as it is believed that this will foster the child's alertness of memory in later years of life.

It would be very difficult to determine here to what extent the impor- 876
tance laid on memory and memorization has been the product of the
Islamic view of learning. It should be mentioned, however, in this con-
nection that knowledge, for the Moslem scholars, was not so much a [813]
reaching out to the unknown (research), as it was a mechanical process of amassing the 'known'; the known being eternal and given, is unchangeable. Thus the acquisition of information and the deduction from accepted premises were the most important methods of knowledge.[3] A learned man

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[1] This is, of course, an artificial claim such as the English expression, 'I don't know him
from Adam'. The historical sense amongst the villagers, especially the older generation, is [829]
mainly thought of in the partition between the two eras, the pre-Islamic and the Islamic.

[2] It must be pointed out that in Silwa, or for that matter in Egypt as a whole, there is [551]
no system of first names and surnames. In Silwa, every person is always called by his first
name. Unfamiliarity or respect requires only the addition of the title 'sheikh' in front of [576]
the first name.

[3] H. A. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, pp. 64–6.

876 is to this day judged by the amount of the Koran and the number of
prophetic traditions which he can quote, and the number of proverbs and
maxims he can bring into the argument. It is not surprising then that out
of some twenty learned religious men in the village, five of them are well
known for their perfect memorization of the Koran, two for the memoriza-
[793] tion of many poetic verses of the Sheikhs of the Nakhshabandia sect, thus
[799] becoming the leaders of the order in the village, while two others are
[754] acknowledged as the most able reciters of verses and charms to ward off
the 'evil eye'. From the linguistic point of view, for the speaker to claim
that he knows a great deal about a particular thing, event, or person, is
for him to assert that he 'memorizes it, or him, to the best of his memory'.[1]

779 The writer is inclined to assume that the Islamic culture, or at least as
788 it is practised in the Silwa community, emphasizes and fosters rote learn-
876 ing, memory, and enumerative procedures. There is abundant evidence
of this in the repetitive elements in greetings, in conversation, in the verses
and choruses in folk singing, in the ritual of the mystical orders (zikr), in
the need to know the ninety-nine attributes of God, and the thirty-three
names of the Prophet, and in the traditional way of memorizing the Koran
in the Kuttab. In this connection, MacDonald says, 'Moslem practice
was to repeat aloud until the thing was learnt—that is, by heart. They
had observed, too, that no special thought was called for, only continued
repetition.'[2]

876 In stating that the village culture mainly stimulates memory as the
[153] most important cognitive process one does not necessarily imply that
people in the village have good memories. This emphasis on memory
could be related to what Bateson calls the eidos of a culture, meaning by it
that a culture might have a bias for the standardization of the cognitive
aspects of the personality of its participants expressed in their cultural
behaviour.[3] One is tempted here to ask a similar question to that posed
by Bateson himself as to what extent this bias for amassing knowledge is
limited only to a small number of specialists. In attempting an answer, it
must be remembered that the stimulation of a small number of specialists
[554] can react on the culture as a whole; they have set themselves up as the
leaders of the village life both in religious and social matters. From this
it is fairly justified to conclude, as Bateson did, that 'the individuals most
affected by the stimulation of memory actually contribute very much more
than their fellows to the elaboration and maintenance of the culture'.[4]

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[1] The equivalent phrase to this in the colloquial language of the village is 'hafdanuh hifd', in classical Arabic 'ahfathuh hiftha'.

[2] MacDonald, *Aspects of Islam*, New York, 1911. The resort to rote learning has been the bane of education in modern schools. Criticisms of students' 'parrot-like' work are abundant in many of the official Government Reports. See E. Claparède, *Rapport Général Présenté au Ministère de l'Instruction Publique*, Cairo, 1929; F. O. Mann, *A Report on Certain Aspects of Egyptian Education*, Cairo, 1929; Ministry of Education, *Report on Secondary Education*, Cairo, 1935.

[3] Gregory Bateson, *Naven*, p. 220.

[4] Ibid., pp. 226–7.

INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

The writer is however aware that his surmise concerning the stimulation of memory in the village's culture is neither fully documented nor based on experimental data as was that of Nadel's experiments to ascertain the differences in cognitive processes between the school children of the two neighbouring tribes, the Yoruba and the Nupe.[1] 153

Moreover, the writer cannot comment on the effect of such a cultivation of the habits of rote memory on the individual's character structure. That there is a relationship between the method of learning and the individual's attitude towards himself, and his interpretations of experience, is claimed by Bateson and Mead. They maintain that if the individual is brought up in habits of rote memory 'his character will be profoundly different from what would result from habits of learning by insight'.[2] 156

It can also be shown than the interests and imagination of children are tied down to concrete things and events such as food, animals, ceremonies, farm work, and so forth. It was found that the majority of their responses to story completion, free drawings and in Rorschach testing were highly impregnated with concrete realism.[3] One cannot fail to notice that both 159

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[1] Nadel, from his experiments with story recounting and responses to pictures on some children of those two tribes, concluded that a people possessing a highly developed realistic art and drama, and a rich, complicated, and rationalized religious system, is characterized in the field of psychological reaction by stress on rational elements, logical cohesion, and strongly pronounced meaning-oriented approach as to what is presented to them. On the other hand, a people whose culture lacks such art and drama and whose religious beliefs are centred round abstract and impersonal principles, are psychologically different in the sense that they are more detached and inconsequent in observation and memory, enumerative, more sensitive to spatial and temporal arrangement, stressing unity of situation and emotional tone rather than facts and meaning and rational consistency. 'A Field Experiment in Racial Psychology', in *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XXVIII, 1937–8, pp. 195–211.

R. H. Thouless, experimenting on the perception of twenty Indian students and a group of British students, concludes that the former group showed a significantly greater tendency towards 'phenomenal regression' to the real object than the latter group. For instance, in the case of the Indian students there was greater tendency for circular objects inclined to the observer to be drawn as wide ellipses, for parallel-sided objects with the sides receding from the observer to be represented as parallel, and for objects of the same real size at different distances to be drawn with very little difference in size. 'A Racial Difference in Perception', in *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. IV, 1933. pp. 330–9.

[2] Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, *The Balinese Character*, p. 84.

[3] For typical examples of story completion and Rorschach responses, see appendices.

As to free drawings, the writer has on two occasions asked pupils in the compulsory school to draw whatever they wanted to, and the following is a list of the subjects drawn: oranges, girls carrying baskets on their heads, a boy tending sheep, a car and a palm tree, a boy riding a donkey and a car behind him, a girl feeding a chicken, fish, a car with people gathered around it, palm tree and water, two boys racing on donkey back, ducks, a house, a trader selling sugar to a girl, lemons, bananas and oranges, a man cutting sugar-cane, a boy climbing a palm tree, a girl beating a tambourine, a ceremonial procession near the mosque, a farewell procession for a pilgrim.

When I asked some of the children about their drawings, none of them told me of any plot in the drawing. They were purely representative of things and concrete events. The children's drawings were characterized by the almost entire absence of 'landscape' in [532]

828 [159] One cannot fail to notice that both children and adults have their feet firmly established on the ground, and fancies of imagination are neither encouraged nor desirable.

[154] My informant, Ali, told me a point which is relevant to this question of imagination. He said that one should not think in terms of 'if' or 'as if', as according to the prophetic tradition, ' "if" opens the path for the Devil's advance'. It is also interesting to mention that the classical Arabic word for imagination (khayal) is used in the village to denote 'shadow', and does not refer to a mental process, except, of course, to some literate persons. This does not mean that some children are not imaginative, and they are recognized by other children who may sometimes sneer at them by asking them to relate some of their fantasies (literally pinches). Children would tell you that such flights of fancy run through certain families. Adults, however, do not expect children to use, much less exercise or enrich, their imagination as this would hamper their social and economic maturity.

821 794 In discussing the formal educational institutions in the village at the present time, the Kuttab comes first in importance, as it is the indigenous school for memorizing the Koran. The word 'Kuttab' is an old Arabic word, connected in its etymological derivation with the word 'kitab' (book), being the place where the Holy Book is learnt. The educational 816 ideals and methods of this institution are mainly influenced by the Islamic tradition of learning, an example of which is the advice given by the Caliph Harun al Rashid to al-Ahmar, the tutor of his son, al-Amin, in which he said: 'O, Ahmar, I have given you the child of my blood, the fruit of my loins, and given you power over him, and made him obedient to you; therefore prove worthy of this position. Teach him the Koran, History, Poetry, Traditions, and appreciation of eloquence. Prevent him from laughing except on proper occasions. Accustom him to respect the Sheikhs of the Hashimite family, and to offer a place to the military commanders if they attend to his council. . . . Do not be too kind to him, or he will take to idleness. Improve him kindly, but if that will not suffice, you can treat him harshly.'[1]

Another example would also serve to illustrate the content and method of Islamic education. This is taken from the instructions given by 'Amr Ibn 'Utbah to the tutor of his sons: 'My sons will be deeply influenced by you: favour what you do, and abhor what you avoid. Teach them the Koran, but without wearying them of it, recite to them what is good in traditions, and chaste in poetry. . . . Teach them the virtues of wise men, 000 and keep them away from women's conversation.'[2] Whether with private

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[532] content and of 'perspective' in technique; with persons walking sideways in the ancient Egyptian tradition of drawing.

For similar results about free drawings, see Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea*, p. 12.

[1] A. Ibn Khaldoun, *al-Mukkadimah*, Cairo, p. 399 (Arabic).

[2] A. Shalaby, 'History of Moslem Education' (Ph.D. Thesis, unpublished, Cambridge University, 1950).

whether with private

tutors or in the Kuttab, the most important content in learning is the memorizing of the Koran as the basis of all other knowledge. The Kuttab has been, and is still in many remote villages in Aswan, the institution for religious learning, in which children learn part or the whole of the Koran, to be able to use this knowledge for their recitation and prayers, and the observation of correct ritual and prayer. The learning of reading and writing was always secondary to this all-important aim. 871 794

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a great number of Kuttabs were financed by the revenue derived from charitable foundations called 'Wakfs'.[1] It was not until 1906 that these schools felt the impact of the central Government authority. In that year the Kuttab was organized, and a system of inspection and awards was worked out in accordance with which Kuttabs satisfying the official requirements could avail themselves of it. The aid was dependent upon daily instruction in the three R's, together with religious teaching, combined with a report of the Ministry of Education Inspector as to the general conditions of the Kuttab.[2] Later on, private awards were given to those boys who could satisfy the Inspector in an oral examination that they had learnt all the Koran by heart. 872 794 [658]

In Silwa and its neighbouring villages, there is only one aided 'Maktab', which is the official name for a recognized Kuttab, besides the other five unrecognized Kuttabs.[3] It is significant to note that four out of the six Kuttabs are attached to, or situated very near, a mosque, and the fifth is adjacent, and connected with a clan's guest house. Apart from the obvious connection between the mosque and religious learning in the Kuttab, such a proximity between the Kuttab, the mosque and the clan guest house enables the Kuttab boys to fetch water from the wells of the mosque or the clan guest house to be used for drinking, or for cleaning their wooden tablets. Out of the six Sheikhs running the Kuttabs in Silwa, three are blind. The Kuttab building usually consists of two rooms, with a raised dais in each room for the Sheikh. There is hardly any equipment, except the Sheikh's prayer mat, and the wooden tablets on which the boys write their Koranic assignment. The aided Kuttab is, however, an exception, as it has wooden seats, desks, and a blackboard, and is whitewashed. All the Kuttabs, except the aided one, are confined to boys. Only recently have some girls begun to attend the aided Kuttab, as attendance at it exempts both boys and girls from going to the compulsory school. In fact, throughout the history of Moslem Egypt the keenness on teaching girls the Koran has never been so strong as in the case of boys. MacDonald mentioned, however, that there are records of [732] [793] [346] [562]

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[1] J. Hayworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt.*

[2] Ministry of Education, *Code of Regulations Relating to Grants-in-Aid to Kuttabs*, No. 1161, May 1906.

[3] The Kuttab is usually referred to in Silwa by the name Khalwa—a word which literally means 'an isolated place for worship'.

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954

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872 294 [562] learned women who had finished a Kuttab course and proceeded to a higher educational course in either al-Azhar or the College Mosques (Madrasah); but their numbers were very small in comparison.[1] I was told by one of the Kuttab Sheikhs that some of the pious ancestors recommended that women should only know a few chapters of the Koran to enable them to say their prayers, and also to learn particularly Surat al-Nur.[2] He went on further to say that Imam Malik thought it inadvisable to teach reading and writing to girls as well as to the sons of 'tyrants and oppressors'.[3]

The following is an account of how a boy spends his day in the Kuttab. The day begins always before sunrise and the first boy who arrives in the morning opens the Kuttab door with the key which is usually hidden underneath the door or outside the threshold. The Sheikh (always called by the boys 'Our Master')[4] arrives later, usually after sunrise; until his arrival, the boys would be busy reciting their assigned portion of the Koran which they had written on their wooden tablets the day before. On the Sheikh's arrival, older or more advanced boys would one by one hand over their tablet to the Sheikh and go on reciting what is written on it, and on satisfying the Sheikh as to their proper and accurate memorizing, they would be asked to clean their tablets and proceed to the next assignment. The same procedure is followed with the younger boys. Those who have failed to satisfy the Sheikh by forgetting sentences or hesitating in the correct pronunciation would be asked to go on repeating their assignment to be heard again by the Sheikh later on. In his work in the Kuttab, the Sheikh, especially if he is blind, relies a great deal on one or two monitors ('areef).

After proving that they have learnt their assignment, the boys are asked [778] to wash their tablets with water, the drops of which must fall into a pot, and not be allowed to fall on to the ground as they contain the dissolved words of God on which no one should tread, as this is considered to be sacrilege (haram). This also applies to the tablet itself when the assignment is written on it, and a boy who drops it on the ground has to kiss it in respect. After washing the tablet with water, however, thus removing the previous writing, a layer of whitish clay is put on it to render the surface 212 fit for writing again. The ink is made by the boys themselves, by mixing fine oven soot with ground roasted nuts of a gum tree together with [386] some gum. This mixture is left for some time to brew before it is actually used.

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[1] D. B. MacDonald, *Aspects of Islam*, pp. 293-4.

[2] On looking up this Koranic chapter, the writer found that it mainly dealt with preventive measures against fornication and slander, and related the story of 'Ayisha, the Prophet's wife, when she was slandered by enemies, and how God revealed the truth about her chastity.

[3] The writer had no opportunity of checking the truth of this statement attributed to Imam Malik.

[4] The Kuttab Sheikh is usually called by this title, 'Our Master', even by adults, especially the illiterate people—see Taha Hussein, *al-Ayyam* (An Egyptian Childhood).

used. The pens are made out of maize stalks, the end being sharpened to 212
a point by a razor. This point is then divided in the middle. [413]

After the tablets have been dried in the sun the time for writing the new 872
assignment comes. Monitors gather the boys around them and dictate to
them, either from memory or from a copy of the Koran, what they should 794
write. The monitor dictates to each of his pupils in turn, a sentence at a [212]
time, and so comes back to the first one, and this continues until the
dictation is finished. Some of the beginners do actually use the tablets for writing without actually knowing how to write, although they might be able to recite the alphabet. What really happens is that the monitor manipulates the hand of his pupil on the tablet, or he may write the lines with his fingernail on the tablet, asking the young boy to trace his writing with the pen. He then asks each of the boys to read back to him what he has written. After this the monitors themselves start writing their assignment, which they should read to the Sheikh seated at his feet.

All this takes place in the morning (until about ten o'clock), after which the children are allowed an interval for breakfast. They go home for this and return after a short time to resume the second working period, which lasts until noon, and during which the boys will be reading their written assignment under the supervision of the monitors.[1] Sitting facing the walls, with their tablets in front of them, the boys will be reciting aloud their set texts and swaying their heads and bodies forwards and backwards. The babble and din of the Kuttab is the sure sign for the Sheikh that it is busy and hard-working, for immediately the din dies down, the Sheikh will incite his boys to raise their voices and get on with their work. If the boys persist in any disobedience, the Sheikh would use his stick, laying about him without exception, hitting their backs, whereupon their voices would rise and go again at full pitch. This repetition continues until noon, when the Sheikh claps his hands, letting the boys go for their lunch.

After the lunch recess the boys return to the Kuttab, each carrying a [465]
loaf of bread for the Sheikh. This has been selected by the mother as one of her best-baked loaves. Some children do not take loaves with them, but, as a result of an agreement between the Sheikh and the father, the former receives a stipulated amount of corn at the end of each harvest. The loaf, however, is a token of the teacher's work, and ideally, he who teaches the Holy Book is not expected to ask for a remuneration. In fact, the Sheikh receives in addition to the daily loaf certain gifts on various occasions, such as when the boy finishes his alphabet and begins to write the first chapter of the Koran, at the end of each section (juza) and so on. He also receives a white garment, in addition to other gifts, when the boy finishes the whole of the Koran.

The first part of the afternoon work in the Kuttab is taken up with

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[1] The time in the Kuttab is not regulated by the hour, bit is usually fixed either by the noisy arrival or departure of a train, or according to the shadow cast by the sun from the wall, or a boy's shadow. [805]

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872 794 more memorizing of what was written in the morning, irrespective of whether the boy has actually learnt it or not during the previous period. The latter part until the afternoon prayer ('asr) would perhaps be occupied with revising the previous assignments. This is mainly co-operative work where groups of children are formed, according to the level of their advancement in their learning. On other afternoons, instead of such revision, boys may practise penmanship by writing out the alphabet, or copying out the prophetic tradition.

Such is the procedure followed every day in all the village Kuttabs, except on Thursdays, when boys leave the school after the morning break and take Friday as a holiday. On Thursday morning the boys do not write any new assignment from the Koran, but spend the morning either listening to readings from the Prophet's life and trying to learn some of the poems in his praise, or by imbibing some religious teaching, such as lustration, prayer ritual, and Islamic obligations. This might be followed by a general sweeping of the Kuttab floor in which everybody takes part. Thursday morning always ends with a congregational prayer which is said firstly by the older boys, and then repeated by the rest. The text of the prayer is as follows:

[539] [782]

O, our Lord, O, our Lord,
Who listens to our petitions,
By the sanctity of Mohammed,
Frustrate not our hopes.
Mohammed is the son of Abdullah,
and the reader of Allah's Book.
As the Holy One in Paradise,
Calls us to enter into his company
Where he will give us the drink as we shall give unto him
From the Springs of Paradise,
O, our Sheikh (who is present), may God forgive his sins,
For us and for him, the door of Paradise,
As the door of Paradise is (prepared) for the Moslems
And the door of the Fire for the Unbelievers.

After this is finished, they all recite together:

O, our Mustapha (one of the names of the Prophet), accept our petition,
And teach us knowledge, and increase in that abundantly.

This prayer will be followed by the Sheikh's exhortation to all the boys to be obedient to their parents, revise at home those parts of the Koran which they have already learnt, not to play idly in the streets, and to the older boys to attend the Friday prayers in the mosque. Then the 'Fatiha' will be read by the Sheikh; and the boys, after kissing the Sheikh's hand, go home or straight to the field. [576]

INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

This is the normal routine of the Kuttab, one which has now been 87 challenged by the compulsory school which does not allow any boy be- 79 tween seven and twelve years old to attend the Kuttab for a full day, and at present only those who are less than seven or over twelve can afford to remain in the Kuttab for the full day. In spite of this some of the compulsory school boys attend the Kuttab early in the morning where they write their Koranic assignment before going to the school; some of them bring their loaves of bread at lunch-time for the Sheikh, and spend about an hour after the end of the school day in the Kuttab learning the Koran.

The Kuttab is not merely an educational institution for the boys. 794 Adults also visit it to consult the Sheikh about certain religious matters, to have a letter written, or a charm supplied against the evil eye, or just to listen to the Koran being recited, or even for an ordinary chat. They have free access to the Kuttab, sitting outside or in the outer room, or they may enter it to ask the Sheikh's permission to take away their boy temporarily for some pressing errand or task. One occasionally sees adults [782] bringing food or tea to Kuttab children as a 'karama', or to invoke the boys' purity in asking God to fulfil one of his wishes. The Kuttab boys are supposed to combine the innocence of children with the 'baraka' of the Koran, and hence their prayers are usually answered by God. Parents go [865] to the Kuttab to complain to the Sheikh about the misdemeanours of their sons, whereupon the Sheikh would give the boys concerned a lesson on the importance of obedience to parents, or threaten them, or even [876] thrash them in front of their parents. The method of discipline in the Kuttab is that of *jus flagelli*. In cases of serious offences such as offending one's father or swearing at religion, or mentioning the mother in swearing, two strong boys would hold the offender's feet in a turban (usually the offender's turban if he wears one), and lift them in front of the Sheikh, who would administer the striking as he deems fit. The corporal punishment administered to the children by the Kuttab Sheikh is almost universally accepted by the villagers without complaint. During my stay, there was only one occasion on which one of the villagers lodged a complaint against the Sheikh to the police, accusing the former of unduly thrashing his son, and this, according to the Sheikh himself, was the first event of its kind in his lifetime. Since then none of the Sheikhs has accepted that boy in his Kuttab.

The Sheikhs are indeed highly respected in the village, for they not 793 only teach the boys the Koran, but derive their status from the fact that they are the perpetuators of the Holy Book giving enlightenment to the people on religious matters. In Silwa and its neighbouring villages, the leaders of the mosque prayers (Imams) are always Kuttab Sheikhs, and people seek their advice if they are in doubt whether a particular action or deed is in conformity with religious injunctions. Some of them also recite the Koran during the nightly celebration in Ramadan and at

793 'mulids', weddings and funerals. They are never addressed without the prefix of 'Sheikh'.

In evaluating the educational aims of the Kuttab, one must remember
871 the purpose of such an institution in a community like Silwa, and its aims
794 in Egyptian society in general during the eighteenth century for instance.
The present Kuttab in Silwa fulfills the task demanded of it by the people
[896] in maintaining the standards of Islamic learning in which the memorizing
of the Koran comes first and foremost. Indeed, the religious and moral ideals of Islam have determined the scope of Islamic education. For the Greeks, education was part of politics, for the Moslems it is part of a comprehensive system of theology. For the latter the object of education is the salvation of the soul and not the control of nature and society.[1]

To expect the Kuttabs to prepare children for practical life or to teach them arithmetic, drawing, or rhythmic movements, according to some of the modern critics of these institutions, is to assume modern standards and social demands in a society which by its very organization does not require its schools to provide such activities. This is the task of the parents, and is to be learnt through life itself. It must be emphasized here that children are sent to the Kuttab voluntarily and they themselves are not averse to attending it to learn part of the Koran. Indeed, the alternative is for the children to work hard in the fields. The Kuttab Sheikhs are fully aware of the drawbacks of the educational system in the village at present. They see that the learning of the Koran by the children is interrupted by compulsory schooling, that parents do not leave their children undisturbed in the Kuttabs but frequently withdraw them to help at home or in the fields. They also complain that fewer boys remain in the Kuttab to go through the Koran again, after they finish the first time, and thus they forget it quickly. Nevertheless, in spite of what one may say of the Kuttab, it is evident from the opinions of the villagers that one cannot ignore the strength of the religious motive that renders this educational institution an integral part of the community. Practically every family in the village with more than two sons would like, as an ideal, to dedicate one of them 'to the cause of knowledge' (Ilm). Moreover, one notices that it is usually the younger brothers who attend the Kuttab, as the older brothers are more often needed for father's aid in farm work. Yet it is not unusual to hear of a man taking a vow to send his first son to the Kuttab, for this means an economic sacrifice for the sake of 'baraka', emanating from learning the Koran. Sending the youngest boy to the Kuttab is considered as a way of showing parental affection for the last born, by sparing him the arduous tasks of working in the fields.
Blind boys find in the Kuttab a place where they can absorb themselves
[732] in learning the Koran, and it is mostly these blind boys who remain in
the Kuttab until they finish memorizing the whole of it.

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[1] See for example the writings of Al-Ghazali, *Ihya-ulum-iddin* (Boulak, 1872); Az-Zarnuji, *Ta 'lim al Muta'allim Wa Tariqat at-ta 'allum* (translated by G. E. von Grunebaum and Theodora M. Abel, New York, 1947).

the Kuttab until they finish memorizing the whole of it. It will be shown 000
in the next chapter how the role of the Kuttab has been seriously challenged by the modern system of schools.

In addition to the Kuttab, the village mystic order of Nakshabandia 794
must be considered as an organized educational institution for adolescents 883
and young men, where they enjoy comradeship of 'The Path' and learn religious and mystic practices, stories and verses.[1]

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[1] See Chapter IX.

Chapter Eleven

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

871 After reviewing the indigenous aims and methods of learning and teaching, we turn now to the modern system of schooling which has affected the village as a result of the national educational policy. This type of schooling is represented in the two schools of the village, the compulsory and the primary school.

872 658 The compulsory school was established by the Provincial Council in 1925. In discussing the village compulsory school one must inevitably touch on educational problems at the national level. Compulsory schools were established to meet the long-felt need for mass literacy. The 'Egyptian Constitution' promulgated in 1923, declared in Article 19 that elementary education should be free and compulsory for all boys and girls. Accordingly the Ministry of Education planned to put this article into effect. The Ministry's scheme rejected the Kuttab as completely inadequate to cope with the problems of illiteracy, and of no educational value. Hence, new schools, called 'compulsory schools', had to be established. The period of compulsory education was to be for five years (from seven to twelve years old) on a half-day basis. The object of this programme was to benefit the maximum number of boys and girls. The time limit for completing the programme of compulsory education by providing a place for every child and thus abolishing illiteracy was fixed as fifteen years, and was extended later to twenty years.[1] The scheme was based on the participation of the Provincial Councils with the Ministry of Education, the former to be responsible for the sites, buildings, furniture and equipment; the latter for the staffing and administration. In 1933, owing to the difficulties entailed in the previous programme, a new education bill was passed to enforce attendance between the ages of seven and twelve, thus reducing the period to five years instead of six, and still on the half-day basis. Only those who suffer from physical or mental diseases, or those who live more than two kilometres from the nearest school, are exempt. The law also stipulates that the child's parents or guardians are responsible for his education in a compulsory school, if he is not receiving education else-

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[1] Al-Kabbani, *Siasat al-T'alim fi Misr*, Cairo, 1945, pp. 9–10 (Arabic).

where. In default of compliance or in the case of the continued absence of 872
the child, its parents or guardian are to be notified, and are liable to fine [655]
or imprisonment.

These were the main laws governing the compulsory school in Egypt until 1948, and the village school was on a half-day basis up to that year, boys attending school in the morning, followed by the girls in the afternoon.[1] There are usually four classes in the school building and three [346]
other rooms, one for the staff and two for stores. The number of schoolchildren during the year 1950–51 was 138 in the four classes. According to the official records the numbers of children of the compulsory school age for the last seven years were:

TABLE VI

Children of the compulsory school age in Silwa (1944–51) [162]

Year	*Total*	*Boys*	*Girls*
1944	154	77	87
1945	98	50	48
1946	98	45	53
1947	97	48	49
1948	131	60	71
1949	47	26	21
1950	61	38	23
1951	77	51	26[2]

The school, however, has only places for 150 children of all ages, and thus there is scope for some parents to compete for appeal either to the Omda or the headmaster at the beginning of the year to exempt their children from schooling or to withdraw them on grounds of lack of space.

As to the staff, the school has between three and four teachers; two of 875
them at present are from the village itself, and the teachers are either the products of al-Azhar, the theological University, or the Elementary [874]
Training College (four to five years' course). The main requirement for entrance to the latter at the age of fourteen is the memorization of half

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[1] It is indicative of the male-female ethos that boys should attend school first, and even at present when the school is full, and the classes are mixed, the boys sit in the front, with [562]
the girls at the back of the class. This reflects the different sex norm guiding the behaviour of the villagers in comparison with mixed education in the modern Egyptian Universities where, for instance, girl students sit in the front and the male students sit behind them, yet there is no real mixing in the lecture rooms. The front rows are normally reserved for girls, and the general tendency is for the girls to keep to these rows.

[2] The number of children eligible for compulsory school in 1949, 1950 and 1951 is [165]
comparatively low because of the very high death rate amongst both children and adults [164]
between 1941 and 1943 as a result of the malaria epidemic.

875 the Koran at least, and the passing of an entrance examination in Arabic, arithmetic and drawing.

872 Yet compulsory education in Silwa, and probably in the rest of the country, has not been fully accepted by the rural people, and on the whole has been a failure, both quantitatively and qualitatively. I have not met any one of the villagers in Silwa who was enthusiastic about the educational role of the compulsory school. Although the compulsory school teaches parts of the Koran and includes religious instruction in its curriculum, the villagers do not think that it has the proper religious atmosphere which the Kuttab on the other hand provides. In spite of the fact that the teachers themselves are respected by the villagers, the latter quite often refer to the school as 'that place where they teach "wazan" ', the first word in the reader. In the emotional overtone of ridicule implied in the word 'wazan' the villagers themselves have diagnosed the main weakness of the compulsory school which confines itself to the teaching of the three R's—religious instruction, drawing and poems and songs in the classical Arabic (nasheed). Even for the children themselves, the compulsory school seems somewhat exotic, being the place where they learn drawing and singing. On the whole, the acceptance of school as a contributor to the village life has been vitiated by limiting its scope to abolishing illiteracy, and by the irrelevance of its aims and methods to the actual life of the villagers.

It is not surprising, then, that the villagers consider the sending of their children to the elementary school as a waste of time, and try by every means to evade attendance. I have seen quite a few names on the list of those eligible for compulsory schooling after which the village Omda or Sheikhs have signed a declaration that a particular child has left the village for an unknown place. The problem of regular attendance is, of course, a baffling one, both for the teaching staff who keep notifying the parents, as well as the police courts.[1] The dilemma of the two teachers [156] from the village is most acute since they usually find themselves torn between their official duty and their obligations in handling cases of absenteeism from the school. This, in fact, creates a lot of friction between the school teachers and the villagers. Parents come to the school trying to make excuses for their children's absence, or to withdraw them from it for the rest of the day for a pressing task as if the children were in the Kuttab. It is interesting to note here that according to the school records the attendance has certainly improved in the village school since [264] the provision of a midday meal for the school children, a scheme which started in 1942 and was in operation in Silwa in 1947. At present, it is applied throughout all the compulsory schools in the country.[2]

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[1] The statistics of the Elementary Education Department show that in 1939–40 the average attendance in compulsory schools in the whole country was about 60 per cent of the total registered numbers (Al-Kabbani, op. cit., p. 33). In the village, absence from school, or from the Kuttab, is extremely high during weeks of irrigation and time of harvest when there is much work to be done in the fields.

[262] [2] The following is a list of the items of food provided to a child per week:

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However, many of the benefits of compulsory education have been vitiated by the policy of cheap education for the poor. The theory and practice of compulsory education makes this quite obvious. Theoretically, the main purpose has been to train the child in the three R's, and to enable him to understand and to appreciate those principles of social life compatible with his own position, and to lead a good and contented life.[1] In practice, the mark of poverty is even more obvious, comparing the building equipment and teachers' salaries of compulsory schools with those of primary and secondary schools. Up to 1948, the latest year for which statistics are available, the appropriations for compulsory elementary education never exceeded 30 per cent of the total expenditure on other types of schools, while it amounted to almost 70 per cent in other countries such as France, the Netherlands, Ireland and England, bearing in mind, of course, that most of these countries had finished a long time ago with the initial expenses on building and equipment.[2] On the other hand, about 10 per cent of the educational expenditure in Egypt in 1936 was devoted to higher education at the University level, while the expenditure in the European countries previously mentioned amounted in the same year to 4 per cent and 6 per cent at the same level. The year 1936 is not an unusual one, as it represents the proportion of educational expenditure which is one of the main reasons for the top-heaviness of the Egyptian educational system, or as it is usually branded, 'the inverted pyramid'.[3]

Thus to throw the blame of the failure of the compulsory school on to the apathy of the fellah is to make a confusion of issues and an easy way out for those who do not think that education is a commodity to be sold, and that such a commodity must be desirable, useful, or appealing in some ways to the customer. Up to 1948 the compulsory elementary school was a separate world in two respects: separate from the real life of the rural population, and separate from the other types of schools which command

Item of food	*Quantity*
Bread	120 grammes
White cheese	10 ,,
Tomatoes	60 ,,
Nuts (fool soudani)	30 ,,
Salt	1 ,,
Cooked beans (fool midamis)	80 ,,
Oil (No. 1)	10 ,,
Dried dates	60 ,,
Boiled eggs	1

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[1] *Year Book of Education*, 1939, article by the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Education on 'Education in Egypt', p. 746.

[2] See *Annuaire Internationale de l'Education et de l'Enseignement*, 1939. The writer is aware of the difficulties involved in such a comparison, but the differences are so striking that they are certainly significant.

[3] See the writer's M.A. thesis on 'An Enquiry into Inequalities of Educational Opportunities in Egypt' (London University, 1949, unpublished).

872 such a high prestige as they lead to the coveted government posts. In fact, a child leaving the compulsory school at the age of twelve cannot proceed to a secondary school education, except through the primary school, which he is now too old to enter. It must be pointed out here that the primary school leading to secondary and higher education has been a different type of school from the elementary school. In this way, the elementary school population has been debarred from any further educational facilities, except the elementary Teacher Training Schools and al-Azhar. This handicap of the compulsory school has stimulated the idea of unifying the first stage of education for all children of six to twelve years of age, as is the case in other democratic countries. The Elementary [658] Education Act, passed by the Parliament in 1948, was the crowning effort of the previous attempt to bring the primary and elementary schools together. In theory, at least, the curriculum and the equipment at the elementary school are to be brought up to the level of the primary school, with the exception of keeping a foreign language in the third and fourth years of the primary school. In addition to that, the half-day system is to be abolished, and the elementary course is to extend to six years on a full-day basis from six to twelve.[1]

The compulsory school in Silwa has not felt the impact of the new changes except in the name, being called the converted primary school: it has remained the same both in building, equipment and content of education, as well as the period of schooling from seven to twelve, and no children have been transferred from the primary school, as they have never reached the standards required.

Unattracted by the compulsory school, the villagers have been clamouring for a primary school, the desire for which has been motivated by practical purposes. In spite of the Elementary Education Act of 1948, the primary school is, in the villagers' view, the only way leading to government jobs, and thus for wealth and prestige. It happened that during the early days of my stay in the village (December 1950), the Minister of Education in Egypt appealed to the rich to contribute liberally in money or in premises for educational purposes. On this occasion the member of the Upper House for Silwa was persuaded by the villagers to build the school and offer it to the Minister. The site was chosen, and the building was just beginning when the writer left the village in April 1951. The new primary school has actually been functioning since October of the same year. The school takes children from the age of seven to twelve on the basis of an entrance examination in reading, writing, arithmetic and drawing. In towns where there are kindergartens, children who completed 872 the three years of the kindergarten are admitted without any examination. While the elementary school has always been free, the primary school only became free since 1943. The enthusiasm for the primary school in contrast to the blind alley of the elementary school, is that it leads to secondary schools and higher education.

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[1] *Ministry of Education Report*, 1947–8, pp. 3–4 (in Arabic), Government Press, Cairo, 1948. New laws have been recently enacted (May–June 1953) for the reorganization of the educational system in Egypt. The struggle for the unified school is being won. The system is divided into three stages: 1. primary (6–10); 2. preparatory (10–12); 3. secondary (12–16). Curricula for the various stages are under review for their adaptation to the needs of the learners.

In 1948 an Education Act was passed for the unification of the elementary and primary school to provide a common school for all. The ideal implied in the Act is to bring the curriculum and equipment of the elementary school up to the level of the primary school, with the exception of keeping a foreign language in the third and fourth years of the latter, while the former would give more instruction in Arabic and religion. Both schools would thus lead to secondary education.

The purpose of the modern system of education, primary, secondary 871 and higher education, as envisaged by Muhammad Ali during the first half of the nineteenth century, was to train civil servants. The national policy of education, and consequently the people themselves, has connected this type of education with government service. From that point of view, the more children who attended the school the better, thereby providing wider scope of selection of employees for the government administration. The more children went to such schools, the less they received in return. As supply overtook demand, competition forced up the requirements for government jobs and lowered the economic value of certificates and degrees. In the second half of the nineteenth century, for example, a primary school certificate was sufficient qualification for a government job; later candidates for the same job were obliged to produce a secondary school certificate, and later even university graduates failed to find remunerative work.

In spite of all this, the appeal of such schools and institutions leading, not to the 'white collar' jobs in general as in the West, but particularly to government posts, cannot be exaggerated. Mann's observation in this respect still holds: 'In no other country in the world perhaps do the professional [554] classes and especially the civil servants enjoy such widespread prestige and admiration. Hence inevitably the enthusiasm of Egyptian parents flows irresistibly into the channels of superior education, secondary or higher. The result is that there is a continual over-pressure on the accommodation of primary and secondary schools and the higher colleges, and public opinion persistently demands a further expansion of facilities at a time when the gravest doubts have arisen in the minds of the competent authorities whether a supply of professionally trained men is not being annually produced far larger than the country can ever hope to absorb.'[1]

This research had been conducted before the establishment of the 872 primary school in Silwa, and thus may serve as a base line for the effect of such an education on the village life. From information received, the

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[1] F. O. Mann, 'Education in Egypt', *Year Book of Education*, 1952, p. 591.

872 villagers consider the establishment of a primary school in their village as a sign of 'blessedness' enabling their boys to find some scope for work in government jobs, especially as the land resources are becoming increasingly limited. As one of the villagers put it, 'It is free education for which one had to go previously to Aswan or Cairo'. The new school accommodates 138 pupils in three grades. As expected, it has affected the number of boys who go to the Kuttab, the numbers of one of them declining from forty to fourteen. It has also affected the number of boys in the elementary school, especially those in the third grade who, instead of remaining in the school, preferred to go to the second or third grade of the primary school. The two following statements express the feeling of the boys about the new school:

[177] [291] A boy of twelve said: 'We like the new school, as we wear suits (European), which are much nicer than the gallabiahs which we used to wear in the elementary school. The former is better than the latter in its lessons, order, and cleanliness.'

Another boy of eleven said: 'The primary school has more knowledge to teach. We wear an "effendi" suit, warmer and more beautiful than the gallabiah. We shall become government officials when we pass our examinations. Moreover, there are no girls in our new school.'

The boys and girls of the elementary school, in all the ten statements received, envy those boys of the primary school their 'effendi' dress, but equally assert that primary pupils are not better off than they in any way. They say: 'We have the same books and learn the same lessons, and are capable of challenging them in reading, or in the multiplication tables.'

212 After discussing the three educational institutions in the village, it is necessary to review the state of literacy in general. The writer could not possibly make a survey of the literate people in Silwa, but thinks that their percentage would certainly be little less than the average for the whole country. The following table shows the percentage of male and female literates for Egypt as a whole since 1907.[1]

TABLE VII

Literacy in Egypt, male and female

Year	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*
1907	5·4	9·8	1·1
1917	7·9	13·6	2·1
1927	13·8	22·9	4·7
1937	18·[illegible]	26·8	10·5

The general census for the year 1947 has not been published yet, but it is estimated that the total percentage of literacy for this year is about 25 per cent.[1]

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[1] The table is made by calculating the percentage for the figures given in the general census for the respective years.

It is worth noting here that there is no definite standard or critique for determining literacy in the official census in Egypt. Officials who conduct the census may consider a person literate if he or she can read a sentence in print. They might decide to include a person as literate on hearsay. Even if they take writing as one of the requirements for literacy, it is difficult to know exactly what criterion they adopt, and what type of writing or speed they require. A person is sometimes considered literate if he can sign his name.[2]

There is certainly a great improvement in the whole country since 1907 with regard to the percentage of literacy, especially in the age group between ten and nineteen. The following percentages show the state of literacy in different age ranges.

TABLE VIII

Literacy in different age ranges

Age	*1907* %	*Age*	*1917* %
0–9	1·2	0–9	3·2
10–14	7·7	10–19	10·2
15–19	8·4	20–29	9·6
20 and over	7·0	30–39	8·5
		40–49	8·7
		50–59	8·1
		60 and over	4·6

Age	*1927* %	*1937* %
5–9	11·8	38·6
10–14	18·2	21·8
15–19	14·9	16·7
20–29	14·8	14·7
30–39	13·7	13·4
40–49	13·2	13·0
50–59	8·3	7·6
60 and over		
not stated	10·0	18·9[3]

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[1] Ministry of Social Affairs, *In the Service of the Egyptian Village*, pamphlet 2 (Arabic), Government Press, Cairo, 1951.

[2] It is considered that literacy requirement must include the ability to translate the signs not only into sounds, but also into meanings. It is suggested that a good test for writing ability is to dictate one hundred words from a basic word list asking the person to write them down. Unesco, *Fundamental Education*, Paris, 1947, p. 24.

[3] Worked out according to the 1907 Census, p. 142; 1917 Census, p. 565; 1927 Census, p. 565; 1937 Census, pp. 210–12.

212 This improvement is also obvious in Silwa itself: ten years ago there were two public scribes in the village to whom people would resort for letter-writing or making formal complaints, but they have had to close their establishment on not finding enough customers. The spread of literacy in Egypt has generally been made more difficult because of the difference between the colloquial and the classical Arabic, which is taught [192] in schools. The relation of the former to the latter is almost like that of Swiss German to High German. Moreover, some reformers maintain that it takes too long with the present script for the child to become sufficiently literate, and this difficulty has prompted some Egyptian scholars to advocate a Latin script instead of the present Arab script.[1] The numerous rules of inflection, changing vowels and consonants, and the diacritical marks attached to the words according to meaning, make correct reading a tiresome task. It has often been said, and not without some measure of justification, that in European languages, one has to read in order to understand, while in Arabic, one has to understand in order to read.

In Silwa, however, though people are increasingly attaching more 212 importance to the ability to read and write, this instrument cannot be 871 considered as a vital motivating force in their lives. The villagers' traditions can be mainly communicated orally, with a few literate persons on whom would devolve the responsibility of communicating the cultural and religious aspects requiring literacy. It is not surprising, then, that some of the villagers, especially most women, who had learnt reading and writing at a compulsory school, have almost relapsed into illiteracy. The remoteness and relative isolation of the village, along with the poverty in cultural influences such as newspapers, books, and other suitable reading [804] material, explain to a great extent this phenomenon. The degree of literacy could be better assessed, however, from the kind of literature that is read in the village, and from the extent to which the reading ability is utilized. There are hardly any books in the village, except those few related to religious matters in one way or another. The following is a list of all the books which are acquired and read by the villagers:

Books on Jurisprudence (fikh): *Matn Assafti*, *al-Ishmawi*, *Sharh abu-al Hasan*, *matn Addardiri*, *Risalat Ibn abi-Zaid al-Kairawani*, *Azzurkani*.

Burdat-al-Busiri (The Mantle Ode), a hymn in praise of the Prophet.

Dalail al-Khairat. A book read usually for propitiation, and in petitions to God.

Matn al-Jawhara in Divinity (Tawheed—Unity of God).

Manakib Assaliheen (The Virtue of Pious Men).

Mankib al-Hassan wal-Hussein (The Virtues of the Prophet's Cousins).

Manakib Assayid al-Badawi.

Kasaid ahl Attarik (Poems of the Mystics).

Certain books from which texts of charms are copied.

Mawlid al-Manawi (Prophet's Life-story).

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[1] A. F. Fahmy, *Latin Script for the Writing of Arabic* (Arabic), Cairo, 1944.

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Mawlid Salma (Prophet's Life-story).

These books are usually obtained from an itinerary vendor, who occasionally visits the village. 871 Amongst those who own books, three persons [443] actually possess the bulk of the books found in the village: they are the Sheikh of the recognized 'Kuttab', a village school teacher, and an ambitious young man who owns a shop in the village at present, after having spent more than ten years in Cairo and Alexandria. Yet perhaps none of these people possess more than a dozen books.

As to the spread of the newspapers, there are ten persons in this com- 204 munity of over three thousand people who buy newspapers, although not regularly. They get them from a distributor travelling by local train. [443] Three of the newspaper buyers are shopkeepers, while two others are teachers in the compulsory school. News naturally infiltrates to a large 203 extent through reading aloud the news in the village gatherings, or through 209 borrowing the newspapers. Up to 1951 there was no radio set in the village 546 and, of course, no cinema, thus contact with the outside world, as far as these aids are concerned, was entirely absent.

The extent of literacy in this community could also be expressed in the 871 number of people who have been to any school other than those educational 871 institutions existing in the village (before the establishment of the primary [212] school in the village). The following is a list enumerating all the boys and men who are receiving some kind of education outside the village:[1]

Nine boys in the primary school in Aswan (under 12 years old). [873]

One boy in the secondary school in Aswan (14 years old).

Six boys in the Training College for Elementary Teachers in Aswan. [874]

Two elementary school teachers who are actually teaching in the village compulsory school.

One higher education.

In analysing these educated people from the village, it is important to show the various incentives for their education. Four of those in the primary school and the elementary training college are cousins: the father of two of them is an Azharite and a teacher at the village school, and it is not surprising that he should send his two sons to school in Aswan. Two years ago, however, his younger brother quarrelled with him, and decided [578] to vie with him at every turn, even in sending two of his sons to the same schools as those of his brother. Two of the other boys are sons of a relatively [586] well-off woman who forced her husband to divorce her. She then married a younger man, and managed to keep her two sons under her custody by sending them to school and personally bearing the expenses incurred by their education in Aswan, as the father himself could not do so. One of the boys in the primary school in Aswan is the son of a blind man who posses- [69] ses practically no land and on receiving aid (£E2 a month) for his disability from the Ministry of Endowment, decided to send his son to school. [732]

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[1] There are no village girls at all who have received or are receiving education outside the village compulsory school.

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871 [578] One of the boys in the elementary training college is an uncle of another boy in the primary school, to which the latter was sent after his mother quarrelled with his grandmother and decided to live in a separate house. To assert her independence and prestige, she also decided to send her son to receive education in Aswan like his maternal uncle.

Here it is obvious that apart from the benefits that may be gained from such an education outside the village school, the impulse of emulation and rivalry, especially amongst kinsfolk, must be regarded as one of the strong forces that led some of these boys to be sent to school in Aswan. Moreover, except in the case of three boys, they are by no means the sons of the comparatively well-to-do people in the village. In fact, neither the Omda nor the village Sheikhs have any sons at school in Aswan.

080 The writer concludes this chapter with certain reflections concerning the function of modern education and the process of social change in Egypt. Many critics of this system have noted, with alarm, that the schools as they stand have outlived their function of producing government officials. The bureaucracy of the administrative machinery is already loaded. Out of a total expenditure of £43,558,88 4 in 1940–1, the salaries and wages of government civil servants and employees amounted to £15,799,001 or about 30 per cent; the corresponding figures for 1944 were £82,097,005 and £23,495,275 or over 20 per cent of the total State expenditure.[1]

Moreover, the effect of modern schooling is usually the alienation of the best boys in rural societies from their background, since they are only to be satisfied with a government post. One wonders what would happen to the economic productivity of the country if the expansion of education were envisaged purely in terms of the content of modern schooling.[2] The liability of the modern school products has been felt, and the irrelevance of their education has been criticized by many educationists and reformers.[3] It has been rightly stated that 'any programme for change should assess the part the school can play. For too often the school is a means of weaning the brightest boys and girls away from their local communities, when it should be more concerned with directing awakened interest to improve local conditions.'[4] As in the indigenous education of the village under study, education for social change must also take into account both the technical and the cultural aspects, and schools must

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[1] *Annuaire Statistique de Poche* for 1946, p. 234.

[2] The average wheat yield in Egypt is 1,700 lb. per acre, nearly as high as that of Great Britain; corn gives the highest yield per acre in the world, while cotton, the principal export crop, yields an average of 606 lb. per acre compared with 328 in U.S. and 368 in the Soviet Union. Doreen Warriner, *Land and Poverty in the Middle East*, London, 1948.

[3] Ministry of Education, *Report on Secondary Education*, Cairo, 1935. *Report on Educational Reform in Egypt*, Cairo, 1942.

[4] *Experience with Human Factors in Agricultural Areas of the World.* Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1949.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954

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contribute to the economic life being an important factor not less than labour and capital in the productive processes. As Malinowski puts it, 'Realism is safer than wishful thinking and the school must face squarely the end of the road on which it is leading the child and not impart hopes and illusions which are bound to be shattered. A sound society must be based on the even distribution of occupational groups—manual, skilled and professional.'[1]

Yet one should not lose the sense of proportion in evaluating the modern system of schools. Many achievements contributing to social change in Egypt have been facilitated through the modern school with its training in new skills, new ways of thinking and living. The position of modern secular education as a coveted type of education is the opposite of what it was a century ago. In the days of Muhammad Ali, and even after his reign, these schools and what they stood for, were opposed. Artin says: 'L'antipathie que le paysan égyptien éprouvait contre la conscription militaire s'étendit à la conscription scolaire.'[2]

Yet if it is easier to assess the expansion of this type of schooling and the increasing opportunities given to children of less affluent parents to obtain it, it is certainly a difficult task to point out why its content and organization have taken on the present frame. It is not easy to determine why its curricula are what they are, or why it has emphasized literary and theoretical aspects almost to the exclusion of practical training or why the secular system of education has existed side by side with a parallel system of religious education centred round al-Azhar.

Awareness of the historical and social forces that determined the existing content and organization is an essential step in educational reconstruction, since 'the intentions of educational planners are often challenged if they suggest new forms of educational institutions and new emphasis in the content of schooling'.[3] Sometimes historical antecedents are taken for granted without any critical evaluation. An example here may serve to illustrate these points. Modern schools in Egypt are the result of the impact of the liberal tradition of education in the West, as the intention of such schools has been the training of the *élite*, but it has been understood in Egypt that this brand is the only type of education worthy of pursuing. This system of schools was introduced at a time when the dominant cultures of the West, especially France and Britain, had a vocational and liberal education with different aims and different philosophies. The education policy, whether it was that of the French advisers of Muhammad Ali or that of the British, strongly reflected the liberal tradition.[4] Being a

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[1] B. Malinowski, 'The Pan-African Problem of Culture Contact', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLIX, 1943, pp. 631–2.

[2] Yakūb Artin, *L'Instruction Publique en Egypte*, Paris, 1890, p. 80.

[3] Margaret Read, paper on 'Cultural Contacts in Education' referred to in the Introduction.

[4] Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, Vol. II, London, 1908, p. 535.

880 public school product, Cromer, for instance, was naturally dominated by 'the Whig tradition from which he could never unfortunately escape'.[1]

Neither in the indigenous way of training as seen in the earlier chapters 871 nor in the literate climate of opinion in Egypt before its cultural contacts with the West, is there any distinction between vocational and liberal education. A literate man was not necessarily a person who could read and write, but one who had received moral and religious instruction, enabling him to lead the 'Good Life'. Moreover 'literate and illiterate' corresponded to 'employed and unemployed'.[2] From the writings of Ibn Taimiyah, one of the Moslem thinkers of the thirteenth century, there seems to be no distinction between education and vocation. He maintained that a vocation was one of the compulsory sciences which the community considered necessary to impart to its members. The duty of 'al-muhtasib' (the market inspector in Islamic institutions) besides inspecting the markets and the tradesmen, was to inspect the schools.

800 The distinction between 'culture' and 'utility' is not an intrinsic one and is based in the West on a view of a social order where human beings are divided into those who are capable of a life of intellectual pursuit and those who have to work to provide them with the necessary leisure for that pursuit.[3] Such a view has vitiated educational theory and practice for a considerable time and brought about the dualism of liberal and vocational education.[4]

[1] Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer*, Vol. I, London, 1933, p. 161. See also S. I. Hammad, 'French and British Influences in Egyptian Education', M.A. Thesis, London, 1949 (unpublished).

[2] A. al-Jabarti, *'Ajaib al-Athar*, Vol. II, Cairo A.H., 1322, p. 214 (Arabic).

[3] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, London (1947 ed.), p. 294. See also Herbert Read, *To Hell with Culture*, London, 1941. Lancelot Hogben, *Political Arithmetic*, London, 1938; *Dangerous Thoughts*, London, 1939.

[4] For a defence of pursuing knowledge for its own sake and for liberal education see Abraham Flexner, *Universities: American, English and German*, Oxford University Press, 1930. For an opposite view see Council for Curriculum Reform, *The Content of Education*, London, 1946.

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Chapter Twelve

REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

THE preceding chapters represent a study of indigenous education 181 in the village community of Silwa against a full portrait of the community life and organization. While it would be impossible here to gather up all the threads from which the whole survey has been woven, some general observations and conclusions can be made as an expansion of some of the issues already raised.

It must be emphasized here again that the education procedures, content and methods discussed in this work obtain in a relatively homogeneous, isolated community of small landholders. The characteristics and the end-product of these educative measures and child-training practices cannot be generalized without wider research in other areas and provinces having different cultural and economic backgrounds. A particularly relevant type of research would be, for example, in peasant communities of large farms, or in villages where there exists a number of families descended from old aristocratic families. Since large and small farmers may differ in a number of ways that are causally interrelated and self-consistent, one would expect that such differences would have their reflections in some aspects of children's education.[1]

Another general observation emerging from our functional approach is 182 connected with the oft-heard criticisms of the irrationality of certain social institutions and customs in rural Egypt. Many social thinkers and reformers in Egypt have condemned the elaborate and expensive celebrations of circumcision, weddings, and funerals as pitfalls through which the conservative peasant falls into debt. The extended family has also been described as an institution that causes some of its members to shirk responsibility and become indolent.[2] It is apparent that these critics

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[1] For sociological formulations concerning the interrelationships of the family, farm economics and kinship amongst a small farm population, see Conrad M. Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland*, Cambridge University Press, 1940. See also Julian H. Stewart, *Area Research*, pp. 123–4.

[2] A. Ammar, *The People of Sharqiya*. Also L. K. Tao, 'Some Chinese Characteristics in the Light of Chinese Family', in *Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*, ed. by E. E. Evans-Pritchard *et al.*, London, 1934.

182 evaluate such institutions purely from the point of view of their immediate economic rationality and not as means of 'mutual adjustment of purposes in a total situation'. In such above-mentioned occasions, one can hardly fail to note the social values connected with prestige and the elements of reciprocity embodied in these forms of celebrations. Moreover, one cannot ignore the validity of their educative and cohesive functions. Since reciprocity is one of the major stabilizing forces in this community, its importance requires 'spinning out', since 'a solitary presentation of the principle would be ineffective'.[1] The economic method of interpreting social phenomena is one devised by particular workers as a means of considering such phenomena in the light of their particular field, and cannot be accepted as the whole or the sole explanation. The rationality of ceremonies and the functionalism of the extended family must be interpreted in the light of the community's social ends. In this connection, Firth remarks that '. . . economic activity is subordinate to social ends. It is only by studying those ends that one can see how particular economic systems work'.[2] It was pointed out how social and religious values render dealing in usury, or acceptance of compensation, repulsive to the moral code of this community. On the other hand, social prestige and rivalry 578 combined with a weak ego-structure would explain why law-suits about land or other quarrels can be pursued with seemingly endless effort and expense, to the extent that such procedures might cost both sides more than the market value of the object under dispute.

Failure to assess social facts in their total cultural perspective has often 178 militated against the best intentions of reformers. Compulsory education 182 in terms of abolishing illiteracy has yielded negligible results, as shown earlier, even compared with the expenditure allocated to it. It has been related to neither the cultural needs nor the technical skills required in rural communities. Campaigns against infectious diseases must take into account the fact that, to the villagers, fear of contagion is subordinate to the rendering of reciprocal social obligation connected with sickness. The preference for reserving and offering the 'best food' to guests or strangers rather than be eaten by the members of the family for its 'nutritional value' must be viewed and understood first in terms of 'the people's values' concerning hospitality and generosity.

178 The adherence to traditional customs, beliefs, ways of thinking and 156 living is the basis of the peasants' psychological security. That peasants rigidly adhere to their traditions and do not listen to 'reason' as explained to them by scientists or government officials has its root cause in this

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[1] S. F. Nadel, *Foundations of Social Anthropology*, p. 400. It is worth noting that in this community, as well as in many other parts of Egypt, the standardized social comments are legion as are also the respective responses in occasions of work, eating, drinking, building a house, after having a haircut, after toilet, on wearing new clothes, after having a bath, and on many other occasions for which good manners necessitate a particular 576 expression or ejaculation and responding to it in a particular way.

[2] R. Firth, *Elements of Social Organization*, p. 153.

psychological factor. Professor Read has commented on scientists trained 178 in the fields of agriculture, medicine, or economics, and brought up with great faith in anything labelled scientific, who do not easily realize that the peasant has a sense of security in his very insecurity. She further maintains 'that insecurity is the thing he knows, and he understands it in so far as he has always lived with it and adjusted his practices and his ideas in relation to it'.[1]

These remarks about some of the traditional ways of life in the village 121 are only explanations of certain social facts and imply no value judgment. As Nadel maintains, the social enquirer at some stage in his analysis inevitably turns into a social philosopher and 'must posit absolute aims or purposes, and some self-reliant worthwhileness of actions, since without these assumptions his subject matter simply makes no sense'.[2] We believe that change there can be, and ought to be. But as we have been mainly concerned in this thesis with the analytical and explanatory and not the evaluative categories of enquiry, there is no point in dwelling on the latter here.

This study provokes also a comment concerning the generalization 571 made about the nature of the face-to-face relations in a simple society and the value concepts attached to them. Some sociologists have maintained that, because of the integration of such societies, personal relations are smooth and intimate, and perhaps attractive, contrasted with the discontents of civilization and its disorganizing forces.[3] This seems to be another type of generalization similar to that refuted by anthropologists with regard to the groupistic and individualistic nature of behaviour amongst primitive and peasant societies.

In spite of his emphasis on the group behaviour of the Arab fellaheen, and on the importance of appealing to the whole community, Tannous also mentions incidents of rivalry, conflict, and competition among them.[4] In this study we have noted how the constituent social units of this community give rise to tendencies of conflict and rivalry. It has been shown how the susceptibility to friction in this community's culture finds in the early stimulation of sibling rivalry one of its supporting forces. Both solidarity and friction are cultural expectations among siblings, and this reflects itself in the village structure as well as in its structural relations with the rest of the G'afra villages. It seems that the equilibrium of the community is maintained through an elaborate system of social behaviour

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[1] Margaret Read, 'Common Grounds in Community Development Experiments', in *Community Development Bulletin*, Vol. II, June 1951.

[2] S. F. Nadel, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

[3] See Kimball Young, *Social Psychology*, in his distinction between the characteristics of primary and secondary groups. This is also evident in some of Redfield's writings. See also Lewis Mumford, *Techniques and Civilization*, London, 1934.

[4] Afif I. Tannous, 'Extension Work among the Arab Fellahin', in *Farmers of the World*, ed. by Edmund de S. Brunner, Irwin T. Sanders and Douglas Ensminger, New York, 1947 ed., pp. 78–100.

571 and reciprocal obligations counterbalancing the competitive tendencies within the community.[1]

The vulnerability to tension and friction not only characterizes the 156 constituent social groupings, but obtains in the realm of the interpersonal relationships. Throughout this work reference has been made to attitudes of reserve, constriction, and suspicion prevailing in personal relations. [502] Hearty laughter is rare, and it usually occurs amongst adults in their sarcastic allusions to others, and in belittling their esteem, while apparently seeming to praise them. Suspicion of the evil intentions of others is institutionalized in the evil eye, seeing potential danger in practically everybody. The small family guards its private affairs with great caution, especially its misfortunes, for fear that others may exult or gloat at their expense, or find some way of attacking their moral integrity. The almost morbid fear of shame, the excessive touchiness, the frequent resort to the use of oaths and swearing, the exaggerated expressions of language, and the scrupulous attitude towards food, are all symptoms of a type of personal relationships which could not legitimately be described as intimate and smooth.[2] The impressions I received from those with whom I came in contact during my field work was that the villagers mutually describe each other as greedy, envious, and malicious and, as they usually put it, 'people would distribute your property while you are alive . . .'

Such character traits cannot be taken, as some psycho-analysts would maintain that they could, as indications of neurotic personalities. They are specific adjustments of individuals, and could be attributed to hard realities of economic life, to historical forces of oppression (which perhaps have made the fellah regard authority, for example, with suspicion) and to certain affective energies resulting from child-rearing practices.

Such character traits, and a climate of uneasiness and tension in the interpersonal relationships, have also been reported among the Navaho Indians and the Tepoztlanians.[3]

In this research the writer has become more than ever convinced of the great value derived from the study of 'personality' in both its social and psychological dimensions. Social norms, value systems, religious beliefs, and status, determine directly and appreciably the social behaviour of the individual and are amongst the most stabilizing factors of personality.[4]

[1] This interpretation is based on M. Fortes' 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXXVIII, 1936, p. 604.

[2] With regard to the exaggerated use of language E. Shouby says: 'Arabs are forced to over-assert and exaggerate in almost all types of communication, as otherwise they stand [195] a good chance of being gravely misunderstood. If an Arab says exactly what he means without the expected exaggeration, other Arabs may still think that he means the opposite.' See his article 'Influence of Arabic Language on Arab Psychology', in *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. V, Summer, 1951, pp. 284–302.

[3] Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village*, Chapter XIV.

[4] Audrey I. Richards, in a review of 'Personality in Nature, Society and Culture', in *Man*, January 1951.

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156 Questions of motivation, drive, adjustment, frustration, methods of learning, reaction to authority, modes of fantasy gratification, and the end-product of all these forces in the ego-structure are important elements in the study of personality. In this study it was discussed how the social disciplines contribute to produce submissive, obedient children who lack the spirit of enterprise and initiative. Adults continuously wean their offspring from flights of imagination and spontaneity of action till they almost completely achieve their end by the time their offspring reach adolescence. Mead emphasizes the importance of the cultural methods of socialization as: 'The child will have as an adult the imprint of his culture upon him whether his society hands him the tradition with a shrug, throws it at him like a bone to a dog, teaches him each item with care and anxiety or leads him towards manhood as if he were on a sight-seeing tour. But which method his society uses will have far-reaching results in the attitudes of the growing child, upon the way he phrases the process of growing up, upon the resentment or enthusiasm with which he meets the inevitable social pressure from the adult world.'[1]

154 One of the important psychological mechanisms in the personality of individuals in the community culture of Silwa is the conception of the power of fate, a mechanism which is found in many other peasant communities. According to Kardiner such a mechanism is a tendency to shift personal responsibility on to others or on to supernatural forces. The prevalence of such a tendency is a cultural mode of displacing dependency on parent-surrogates, and thus escaping blame and punishment. With belief in fate one can correlate the presence of very little anxiety about sickness, misfortunes such as divorce, and indifference to self-improvement. It could be said that conditions of closed economy, together with the stifling weight of social and parental pressures, may be considered as important factors in this projective mechanism of fate. In a masterly passage about the Tanala culture of Madagascar, Kardiner maintains that: 'The belief in fate—singularly effective in shunting direct envy and overt-hostility—is a monument to the underlying absolutism which characterizes the culture. It shifts the responsibility from those who actually have power or advantages and places it upon a kind of mechanistic conception of human destiny. The chief function of the belief is to compel the individual to accept his role in life, and not bother those who exploit him, though he is given some right to attempt to alter his fate by magic means. If this fails, he has only fate to blame.'[2] Such is an illustration of the contribution that psychology could make to deepen our understanding of social facts.

155 In this work certain methods and techniques of childhood and adolescent training systems were correlated with some aspects of the cultural behaviour of adults and some of the major trends in their personality structure. In discerning such correlations, functional ties between certain

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[1] Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea*, p. 168.

[2] A. Kardiner, *The Individual and his Society*, p. 314.

155 observed facts were noted by the writer, but no special effort was made to establish their causal relationships or irreversible sequences.[1]

In the light of this study, the psycho-analytical assumption of the relationship between some biological experiences in early childhood and certain adult character traits cannot be confirmed. It is difficult to reconcile, as in the case of the Navaho material, the adults' prevailing attitudes of suspicion, secretiveness, and high level of tension, with the permissive training of infants in breast-feeding, bodily affection and evacuation activities. If one takes the criteria of some psycho-analysts as the sole guide for personality formation, one would expect adults in this community to be cheerful folk, without much constraint in their personal relations, and free and easy in the communication of their innermost feelings and thoughts. One can infer from the data of this study that the experiences and disciplines of later childhood and adolescence are equally, if not more, important in the formation of personality structure of the adults. It is apparent from some sociological studies that to consider a particular experience as traumatic or not, or as favourable or unfavourable for individual adjustment, it must be regarded in relation to other aspects of child life, e.g. nutrition, health and sickness, economic conditions of life, and social disciplines.

From the Navaho studies, Kluckhohn concludes that psycho-analytical theorists are not wholly wrong, but they claim too much for the earliest years of life and do not pay enough attention to later events and to the total situation in which the individual matures.

'Infantile indulgence very probably does constitute the firmest foundation upon which, if late circumstances are reasonably favourable, a secure and confident adult personality can be developed. But it affords only a possible basis; it does not, of itself, promise fulfilment.'[2]

Such a conclusion was also supported by an experiment on rats in an attempt to evaluate the relationship between breast-feeding and acquisitiveness. Hunt experimented on albino rats to determine the effect of feeding-frustration in infancy and the tendency to hoard in adulthood. By comparing the number of pellets stored by two experimental sets of rats, one of which was subjected to periods of hunger, while the other was allowed unlimited feeding during infancy, he reached the following two main conclusions:

(1) The infantile feeding-frustration had no effect on the number of pellets hoarded, while both sets of adult animals were continuously satiated.

(2) The effect of infantile frustration on adult behaviour was shown by the fact that the experimental animals which had been frustrated in their

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[1] See Simon Marcson, 'Some Methodological Consequences of Correlational Analysis in Anthropology', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLV, 1943.

[2] C. Kluckhohn, 'Navaho Infancy and Childhood', in *Psycho-analysis and the Social Sciences*, Vol. I, ed. by Géza Roheim, New York, 1947, p. 86.

unlimited feeding during infancy hoarded more than two and a half times 155
as many pellets as the other set in the post-frustration tests.[1]

It is possible to infer from the experiment on the rats that the early infantile experiences did not produce the expected trait unconditionally, but their fulfilment was contingent on later environmental conditions. It was hunger in these tests that made one set resort to its early experiences.

With the complexity of human needs and modes, the picture of the foundations of human personality becomes more complicated. But whether one follows the psycho-analytical interpretations or follows the framework of a learning theory based on the conditioning of attitudes and interests of children, one cannot ignore the important trends that are stamped on the individual's personality during his early stages of the process of growing up.

In this book, as stated in the introduction, the main concern has been 121
with the general trends and attributes of personality in terms of predictable behaviour. Detailed case studies of individuals with differently constituted personality types would enrich and clarify such diffused and cross-cultural approach. This would reveal how different types of personalities face, handle, and react to the cultural realities, thus either achieving personal adjustment or becoming maladjusted.[2] No one should claim after reading this work that he knows exactly what to expect from every individual in this community, or knows exactly how every one of its members behaves in every situation. The variety and variability of behaviour and action, with which we were not mainly concerned, must not be neglected. Moreover the subjective element and the 'personal equation' of any writer cannot be completely eliminated in the art of writing in social science.

This work represents, moreover, an attempt to study educational issues in the broadest sense of the term, as a function of the cultural tradition that is transmitted to each generation. The 'transmissive' and 'reproductive' role of education in managing and perpetuating cultural organization, maintaining law and order, ways of sanctioning custom and action, have been discussed in this small community. The writer submits that such a type of research is imperative in a society where there are two educational traditions in juxtaposition: the indigenous and the modern. An objective evaluation of the interrelationship between these two traditions must be based on studies of the local culture, as well as an analysis of the aims and achievements of the modern system of schools.[3]

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[1] J. McV. Hunt, 'The Effects of Infant Feeding-Frustration upon Adult Hoarding in the Albino Rat', in *Contemporary Psycho-pathology*, ed. by Silvan S. Tomkins, Harvard University Press, 1947, pp. 425–44.

[2] Karen Horney maintains that the child in coping with the world in its process of growing up develops one of three basic strategies of life: it can move towards people, against them, or from them. *Our Inner Conflicts*, New York, 1945.

[3] A strong plea for studies on childhood and educational institutions on those lines has been advanced by Professor Margaret Read in her inaugural lecture on 'Education and Cultural Tradition'. See also her review of 'Umbundu Kinship and Character' by Gladwyn Murray Childs, in *Africa*, Vol. XXI, 1951.

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000 The educational implication of such a study is its sociological orientation, by viewing the problems of education in relation to their social setting. Such an orientation would embrace, for instance, the study of children and adolescents in their home and community background. The study of an educational institution must be considered in its environment to assess the mutual relations between school and society.

With this orientation, and with the instruments of the functional approach, research was undertaken on 'A Sociological Study of a Grammar School in a Working-class Community'.[1] In this study it was shown how a school in the Dockland community in East London exhibits a cleavage between home training and school learning, and how the children find difficulties in their passage through the school. Chaos of valuations occurs in the minds of many senior boys and girls as a result of the conflict in the two educational streams: one, the governing class tradition of liberal and cultural studies for leadership and social mobility, and the other, of the local community tradition stressing subordination, yet urging the children's scramble for improving their social and economic lot.[2]

Studies of indigenous education also point out the suitability of the degree to which the methods and content of education fit the requirements of that society. Here the main question is not the sifting of bad or good educational policies. As Benedict puts it, 'the "best" education can be a weakness in a society that does not give the adolescent scope to put his learning into practice. The "worst" can be well adapted to all that will ever be required for him as an adult.' She further discusses how some permissive methods of training children amongst some primitive tribes may seem attractive to modern educators, but in the long run these tribes are not the better for pursuing such methods. One of the examples cited for discrepancies of aim and method is rearing children, in the tradition of 'breaking a colt' for an adult life, characterized by co-operative labour and sharing of rewards. The result of such lack of compatibility between child-training and adult requirements is the prevalence of aggression, mean gossip and bickerings in tribal life.[3] Some other tribes slowly graduate their children to adult responsibilities. Van Gennep's analysis of some *rites de passage* in connection with puberty shows how they correspond closely to the change of the individual's social relationships at this stage. The boy is separated from his child group, then kept alone without being integrated into any group before he is finally accepted into the community of adults. Thus the state of transition is enacted and the individual is given access to the necessary tools and equipment of his culture. In the light of some primitive educational policies, Benedict and Mead, as well as other anthropologists, have viewed the efficacy of modern education in schools, and the problems that face the adolescent in the modern complex society. They have pointed out the gaps in modern education in the transmission of the cultural heritage, especially at the stage of adolescence, when transition from childhood dependence to adult independence is expected to take place.[1] 000

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[1] Ph.D. Thesis by M. S. Brown, University of London, June 1950 (unpublished).

[2] For a study of the relationship between the school system and the social structure of a community, see W. L. Warner *et al.*, *Who Shall be Educated?*, referred to earlier.

[3] Ruth Benedict, 'Transmitting our Democratic Heritage in the Schools', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVIII, 1943, pp. 722–7.

As far as Silwa is concerned, it has been shown how the child-training practices impress on the growing individual the social norms with certain dominant themes at different stages. It has also been noted that the child-training system reflects many of the social and psychological attitudes of adult behaviour. Attempts have been made throughout this work to discern some correlations between adult values and personality structure, and techniques of instilling children with 'adab'. Children begin to adopt some of the cultural values of the community even during childhood, e.g. assertive, aggressive, and rivalry attitudes towards other children, while there is submissive and obedient behaviour towards elders; observance of sex regulations and behaviour before puberty; the earlier attainment by girls of sociological maturity, and so on. It was also pointed out from observations, tests, dreams and Rorschach responses, that the children's flights of imagination are curbed at an early stage, thus making the children show striking interest in adult activities of farming, ceremonial celebrations, and kinship relations. The policy of child-training in Silwa sets the pattern of the social relations of individuals in their groupings, and incorporates them as well in the productive activities of the community. 155

Against such a background of the cultural tradition, one can draw certain conclusions. One can see the contributions that an educational institution may make in the social and economic life of a community. One can ascertain the difficulties encountered in its proper functioning. Furthermore, one can view in proper perspective the complex process which children undergo in adjusting themselves to school curriculum and its values on one hand and to the prevailing conditions of home training on the other. 000

Many educational thinkers have emphasized the importance of relating the school to the needs of the community. In this connection it is often assumed that elements in the educational content of a community could be transferred easily with benefit to the school curricula, providing stimulation, and provoking the interest of the learners. Such assumptions often ignore the new situation which has arisen out of the cultural contacts. Those who are thinking in such ways wishfully hope to recreate the past; but in their zeal they tend to ignore the basis of the community's educative forces.[2] In this community, for example, the inclusion in a reading book of some of the local fairy tales, or the inclusion of some of the children's games in the school, would be considered facetious and undignified by 178 [871]

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[1] Margaret Mead, *Growing Up in New Guinea*.

[2] See M. Read, review of Gladwyn M. Childs' book referred to earlier.

178 871 both children and adults. A faith in the practical subjects and in their educative value would be met with reticence in such a community. For such practical skills are considered to be of lower social status than farming; they are judged to be subjects unsuitable for inclusion in the school programme, as their acquisition occurs as a by-product of observation and routine.

000 Studies of this type based on the functional approach towards the place of the school in its social setting are proving to be valuable guides to educational reconstruction. They also provide a buffer through their pragmatic analysis, against the various winds of educational doctrine which sometimes beat upon educational theory and practice with the force of a gale.

Sociological studies have also contributed to the modification of many generalizations about the social and psychological development of *the* child or *the* adolescent. It is becoming increasingly apparent that no study can make sweeping generalizations about the child or the adolescent, as we have always to ask questions about the conditioning factors, e.g. the home and environmental background; or, in a modern community, the class to which the child belongs. An American sociologist maintains that in American education, 'the ineffectiveness of middle-class sanctions upon the great masses of lower-class children is the crucial dilemma of our thoroughly middle-class teachers and school systems. Thus lower-class children remain "unsocialized" and "unmotivated" from the middle-class point of view.'[1]

If one talks in general terms about the development of children's imagination, the stages when they become capable of responding to authority, or of assuming responsibility, and about the conflicts of personal adjustment, he is denying the conditioning effect of social forces which play a potent part in the quality of the individual's development and in his social adjustment. Adult attitudes and expectations must be taken into consideration. It has been shown in this study how, in Silwa as among the Manus, children are almost completely deprived of imaginative potentialities and are very matter-of-fact at a very early stage. Children do not tinker with adult themes of life in their play as preparation for their future life.

To expect that certain characteristics of child development are absolute, irrespective of the adult world, would be to ignore the strength of the cultural tradition.[2] The study of the 'psychology of child development' must be contingent on that of the 'sociology of child development'.[3] The Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago main-

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[1] Allison Davis and Robert Havighurst, 'Social Class and Colour Differences in Child-Rearing', in *Personality in Nature Society and Culture*, p. 263. See also their book, *Father of the Man*, Boston, 1947, pp. 10–11.

[2] M. Mead, *Growing Up*, pp. 267–8.

[3] An interesting example of research in the sociology of child development is a field study of social influence in groups of children by R. Lippitt, N. Polansky and S. Rosen, 'The Dynamics of Power', in *Human Relations*, Vol. V, No. 1, 1952.

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tains that an adequate background for the understanding of children and youth cannot be provided in a single department; it must be based upon various disciplines which would contribute to relating the different factors to human development.[1]

In Egypt, as in many Oriental countries, the textbooks on psychology for use in teacher-training centres and institutes are mainly based on the findings drawn from children in a Western setting. The characteristics of physiological, psychological and social maturity of children found in such textbooks are those observed and formulated by Piaget, Isaacs, Gesell and Wallon. The writer has not been able to trace any study of Egyptian children in their social environment. The carrying out of such studies should be the responsibility of the Psychology Departments of Egyptian Universities and the Institutes of Education, thus furnishing a socially relevant psychology of childhood and adolescence.[2] The lack of studies of children *in situ* in Egypt, as well as in other similar countries, makes much of what is taught about childhood psychology in teacher-training colleges in this area woefully inadequate. Psychological characteristics of children and adolescents are contingent on social conditions, and must not be assumed to be universal.

[1] Robert Havighurst and Hilda Taba, *Adolescent Character and Personality*, New York, 1949.

[2] For the need of such research, see Margaret Read, *Education and Cultural Tradition*.

PART THREE

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Appendix One

THE LIFE HISTORY OF INFORMANTS

GENERAL REMARKS

In writing the life history of my informants—Ali (who is a distant relative) and Mahmoud (who is related by marriage)—I found very little direct information forthcoming from them. Although their confidence was won with respect to their forthrightness in describing the village life and traditions, both were very reserved in talking about their own life. Neither relished the idea of being singled out from the whole village, or being mentioned in a book. 'Why do you want to portray my life especially, and bring it before the English people?' said Mahmoud. 'Let us (in Arabic the plural pronoun is commonly used instead of the first singular) live covered and unexposed in our village; we do not want other people to know about the details of our life.' The writer realized this difficulty from the very beginning of his work, and tried to convince the villagers, as well as the informants, that such research had nothing to do with the Government or any other official authority in Egypt and might bring indirect benefit to them, for the suspicion had to be eradicated that anything written might be taken as a personal commitment, causing as much anxiety to the persons concerned as if they were giving evidence in a court of law. This difficulty rose again in the Rorschach testing of adults, whom the writer had to assure and even sometimes to swear by the name of Allah that this would not subject them to any official pressure or interference. 159 124 [156] [193] [841]

ALI

Ali, being literate, was asked to write down all he could remember of his life-story, the account of which is translated in the following: 159

'I was born in 1921, just a few days before the "Mawlid", the birth anniversary of the Prophet. I cannot remember anything in my life till the age of seven, except that I used to follow my older brother to the Kuttab from the age of five, and play with boys of my age. On reaching the age of seven, I started to go regularly all by myself to the Kuttab. In 1929 I began to go to the elementary school in the morning, and to the Kuttab in the afternoon, and I remained in the school until 1936, when [794]

[P.240 is blank]

159 794 I had to leave and concentrate on memorizing the Koran. After one year I finished the Koran and recited it for my Sheikh Ahmad Mousa to his satisfaction.[1] Then my father offered a "Karama" in the Kuttab, consisting of a meal of wheat bread and meat eaten in the Kuttab by the boys and whoever is present (as one is not supposed to invite persons for a "karama") together with a gift of a white garment to the Sheikh. This was followed by a ceremony called "dorah" (classical "dawrah") going round the village, with sheikhs reciting odes (qasidas) in praise of the Prophet, beating the drum and the tambourine (tar), and followed by other local folk as well as the Kuttab children. On this occasion I wore white [788] clothes; this is a holy practice like that of pilgrims returning from Mecca, who also don white clothes.[2] After this, I stayed in the Kuttab as an "Areef-prefect", repeating the Koran three times during the first year, at the end of which I sat for an examination (oral) set by one of the Ministry of Education inspectors, and on passing it I received a prize of £E2. I remained as an "areef" for three years, teaching the other children, learning the "Munawi mawled"—a rhyming prose as well as poems on the birth of the Prophet, the "matn-al-Ishmawi"—in the Islamic law (Fikh), "Matn al Jawhara" in monotheistic theology (Tawheed), which is in poem 159 form. From the age of nine I had to help my father and older brother in farm work, but I was not pressed to work as my family wished me to devote myself to Koranic studies, and this is one of the things that distinguished me from many other boys in the village. But later in life, especially after my marriage, I had to work harder in the fields. My older brother was responsible for bringing fertilizer from the hill, while my father and myself helped in the other farm tasks such as irrigation, distribution of manure, and harvesting.

'In 1940 I went to Edfu, where the first stage of military conscription [909] examinations takes place, and I was exempted on the basis of my knowing the Koran, after I had succeeded in the oral examination held for the purpose.[3]

'A year before I was called up for conscription, I left the Kuttab and devoted myself to farm work, and I got married when I was nineteen years old. I worked on my father's land until 1944, when I was appointed [744] as a malaria supervisor to distribute tablets of quinine to the families during the malaria epidemic. For this purpose I had to make a survey of the population in the village to distribute the tablets, accordingly asking the

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[153] [1] A memory task of some magnitude: the Koranic text is a little longer than that of the New Testament.

[788] [2] Wearing of white clothes on certain occasions is a symbol of ceremonial cleanliness and purity.

[909] [3] Till 1948, sons of village omdas and sheikhs, those who paid £E20 exemption fee, those who knew the Koran by heart and University students could be exempted from military conscription. Since then a law has been passed decreeing that military conscription is universal, with very few exemptions, e.g. the single supporter of a family in the case of the father's death.

head of the family to sign or stamp whenever he received his allocation. 159
I left this job when the malaria campaign finished in 1948 to resume my [744]
work in farming. Though farming is an honourable job, it does not suffice for the necessities of life these days and I am now looking for another job in the village.

'Later on I went to Cairo and Alexandria for a month to "see the world", [788]
and to visit the holy tombs in these two cities. Indeed, Cairo is the "Mother of the World". Yes, there is a lot of corruption and impiety, but it is preserved by the big Saints, the Mosques, and the "circles of knowledge" conducted in the Mosques. You can also hear the Koran recited beautifully on the radio, and of all this there is nothing in Silwa.

'I occupied some of my spare time in writing letters for some men and women who are illiterate, and who have relatives in Cairo or Alexandria, asking them for financial help or for clothes.'

On asking him to mention the important events in his life, he recorded:

'With regard to the important events in my life, I here refer to the incident that happened when I was very young playing with other children near the railway station. My playmates started to throw stones at each
other and when I started doing the same, my stone smashed one of the [738]
glass windows of the building. I tried to escape the railway guard, but he caught me and I was sent to the omda who gave me three strokes with a stick, and my father had to pay for the repair of the glass.

'The second event I remember was my inability to speak for some time when I was fifteen years old. My parents were worried about it, and
they took me to various Saints' tombs and religious men for treatment. [755]
At last they took me to a Saint's shrine near Isna, called Sheikh Al-Naggar, who is considered to be the best healer for such diseases, especially when one is "mounted by spirits" (jinns). There, with my mother, we spent a week, and from that time I was cured.

The third important event besides my marriage, occurred this year when I deputized for my father on a visit to Bardis, on the invitation of our "cousins" there who wanted to establish their holy descent.'

In assessing Ali's life with regard to his point of view as an informant he is in many ways representative of the learned section of the village population. He not only knows the Koran and is well-versed in religion, but he is also well aware of his mundane and practical duties. The greatest number of the learned men (Khotaba) of the village are either blind, lame, or landless. Ali, on the other hand, is a religious man who has occasionally performed religious functions on ceremonial occasions, and he is also a farmer who works in the fields. He takes part in reading the 'Prophet's Story' during the night-celebration of the Prophet's birth in his clan's guest house, and occasionally reads parts of the theological books on canon law (Fikh) to enlighten himself as well as other people on their religious duties. He is also called upon to write deeds and records, since his handwriting is excellent. He once told me that he took great pains

159 in the Kuttab to improve his handwriting, as the maxim of the pious ancestors runs, 'good handwriting increases the clarity of truth'.

In the whole of Ali's life religion has meant much to him in terms of personal security. His need of recognition and for prestige is certainly satisfied by his knowledge of the Sacred Book and other sources of religious information. With his sensitive and shy nature he could not have integrated his personality except through this religious foundation. Moreover, Ali's subsistence resources have been secure so far as he is still dependent on his father and mother. At the end of every lunar month his older brother, Ahmad, carries Ali's family allowance of corn to the latter's house and no serious quarrel has occurred between him and his father or brother on these grounds. The harmony of relationship between Ali and his father's family could be also attributed to the fact that Ali still lives with his wife's people, who are about five hundred yards from his father's house, while his brother Ahmad lives in the father's household. Ali's father is about sixty-five years old, and is still a robust man, who works in the field, and is considered by his family as tight-fisted.

In contrast to his brother, Ali cares much more for his clothes and appearance in general, and this is one of the reasons his father sends him to deputize for him on various occasions. Moreover, while his brother has been a member of the 'Nakshabandi' mystic sect, Ali has never joined it, as his religious experience has been satisfied through his knowledge of the Koran and literacy, while his comparatively illiterate brother finds his satisfaction in the emotional ecstasy that is invoked by the repetitive rhythm of the mystic circle (zikr). [593] Ali probably had not joined the mystic order because his brother was already a member, and normally brothers are not found together in the Order. On asking Sheikh Hussein, who is the local head of the Order about this fact, I was told: 'Brothers do not come to the Order for the fear of the evil eye. Jacob advised his seven sons never to enter from the same door or follow each other; they should enter from different doors and always spread themselves.' Structurally, this is in harmony with the cultural values of hierarchy, order, and respect relations between brothers, as physical proximity between them in sitting or eating in public is not considered polite.

MAHMOUD

Mahmoud is illiterate, suspicious, and a proud man, so I had compiled his life history by asking him questions that would not arouse any scruples in his mind. He does not know when he was born, he remembers only that he just managed to escape the days of forced military conscription during the First World War, being two or three years younger than the eligible age.[1] This means that he is about fifty years old. My relation to him was that of cousin-uncle, and I used to call him Uncle Mahmoud, [159] which he used to appreciate very much.

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[1] These days are known in the villagers' language as 'saulitah al askaria', when people [702] from the village were conscripted to work on the military roads or as camp sentinels in Palestine during the First World War.

Mahmoud is the eldest and head of a family of four brothers and a half-sister, as well as a cousin living together with them. Only one of the four brothers is a full brother of Mahmoud, the other being half-brothers, while the cousin is from the paternal side, and is also the half-brother (uterine) of the other two from their mother.

Mahmoud himself was first married to his cousin, whom he divorced after having a daughter from her. He remarried, but only one daughter has survived from his second wife, and the death of his son at the age of three was due, as he thinks, to the sorcery of his first wife. Two years after the death of his first wife, her daughter was married to Hassan, Mahmoud's cousin: there is one son. One of his brothers is married to a close relative of Mahmoud's wife, and all the brothers at present are married and work together, although recently two of them went to live in new and separate houses. Before the last two brothers married, all of them were working on their land as well as three acres they usually rent. More than ten years ago one of the brothers went off to work in Cairo as a domestic servant, and since then he has never settled in the village, but pays visits occasionally to see his wife and family.

None of the brothers is literate, except the youngest, who had been conscripted into the army and has there learned to read and write as part of the army's literacy campaign for conscripts. After completing his service he volunteered as a lorry driver in the army, where he works now, leaving his wife and a small boy under the guardianship of his brother, Mahmoud.

Returning to Mahmoud himself, he worked as a farmer until the age of thirty, then he became the head of the village police (ghafeer) and this job seems to have given much scope for his pride and energy. He would usually talk about the order he maintained in the village while he was occupying that post, and emphasize the fact that everybody respected and even feared him. He was dismissed from this post after he had struck [683] someone in a fight, and for this offence he was imprisoned for eighteen months.

During his work as head of 'ghafeers', Mahmoud related with great pride that he managed to prevent the women from going to fill their jars [626] from the Nile on account of certain rumours which had spread in the village about their behaviour along the agricultural road, and this temporary action from his side was met with general approval. It also befell him to carry out the wishes of the preacher from the city, to prevent women [178] from following the bier of the deceased as mentioned in the chapter on social change. He added that, after his time, women reverted to their old practice.

Mahmoud goes to town now and again on business, but, apart from such interruptions, he spends most of his time in the village tending to his farm. Three years ago, one of his half-brothers had a disagreement with

159 him and left him for Cairo, whereupon Mahmoud followed him to effect a reconciliation and the brother was persuaded to return.

A year ago he helped his cousin, who is not strong enough for farming, to open a small shop. The income from the shop as well as from farming is pooled by all the family, Mahmoud being the one who looks after the needs and requirements of all his brothers and their wives.

[755] Mahmoud is a great believer in the evil eye, and it was his practice to warn the writer against certain people by asking him to recite a 'Sura' from the Koran on passing them. He told the writer that he usually spreads on parts of his farm a handful of sand from the tomb of Saint Abu-Naggi, who lies buried on high ground, to ward off the evil eye. In this connection he related the following incident: once, a person well known for his evil eye deliberately passed by Mahmoud's farm and admired it. The same man later passed by his farm and admired his cow, which after that day gave blood instead of milk. As Mahmoud could no longer tolerate the envier, he seized upon the occasion of a funeral in the clan's guest house to which the envier belonged, and went to complain about him, holding a white flag and asking his clan to stop their kinsman from casting his evil eye on his land and animals.

Mahmoud is strong and healthy and takes special pride in the fact that the malaria epidemic did not touch him. He interprets this as evidence that his social intentions and dealing are genuinely good. And because of his health during the epidemic period, he used to visit and assist the sick, and since there were very few who could attend to the burial ceremony and prayers, he made a point of not missing any if he could manage it as attendance is a pious deed and God rewards it. He is also grateful to God [731] that he and his brothers managed to save their bread from the torrent that destroyed most of the village harvest in 1948. They all waded into the water, spending a whole night and morning in gathering their floating stacks of corn and removing them to the dry land.

In assessing Mahmoud's personality and position in the village, one must point out the structurally precarious composition of Mahmoud's family, consisting of half-brothers and a cousin. Yet his personality, together with the close relationship between the brothers' wives, has assured the unity of the family. This might also be due in part to the fact that none of the brothers has a grown-up boy, a factor that might tempt the father to work independently.

Mahmoud combines a conservative and unimaginative nature with extraversion and a great deal of self-confidence. Although he has been to town on frequent visits and occupied an official post, he has not altered his dress or accent in favour of town ways. His 'zabout', the outer garment, still has the long and wide sleeves that stretch at least three inches past the hand, his turban is a large one, and he is fond of carrying his thick stave on moving about in the village.

Mahmoud is a satisfactory example of the older generation of the village, both in mentality as well as in appearance. His wide connections with other families, his geniality and warmth, win him a great deal of respect and prestige. He is also called upon to participate in Arab councils and the writer heard him once telling off another person by saying, 'You have never come out from your place near the house oven, while it is for me to take a part in the conversation in a big gathering'. His qualities for leadership make him the sort of person whose co-operation would be necessary for any plan of social reform. Unlike many other people in the village, his prestige is not based on ownership of a large-sized farm, or piety, but he compensates for that through his personality as well as his brothers' solidarity.

Mahmoud used not to say his prayers in the mosque or anywhere else for a very long time, but lately he has observed them quite regularly and thus, at last, in his own words, 'God has shown me the right way'. I was told by one of his half-brothers that Mahmoud began to be regular in saying his prayers after the successive deaths of his two grand-daughters from his sole surviving daughter. One of his main grudges in life is that he has no son, nor are there any grown-up sons in the whole of the family. It is only two years ago that his cousin had a boy whom Mahmoud pampers and carries about whenever he is free.

Mahmoud is humorously known in the village as the best eater, especially when he was younger. He told me (and I heard it from others) that he challenged some people once to eat fifteen small 'kurs' (a loaf of wheat bread six inches in diameter and half an inch in thickness) with a 'ghamoos' (vegetable), and he succeeded in doing so. He is also reputed to be skilled in slaughtering lambs and goats, and in distributing meat on ceremonial occasions.

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Appendix Two

THE COPTIC AND THE LUNAR CALENDAR

According to the Coptic Calendar the year is divided into twelve months of thirty days each, with the addition of five inter-calary days at the end of three successive years and six at the end of the fourth, and these days are called 'nasee' (prolongation).[1] As this calendar indicates the position of the earth in its orbit, it corresponds to the seasonal climatic changes around which farm work generally revolves. Though very

Coptic Calendar	*Corresponding European dates*	*Lunar Calendar (Higri). These months fall some eleven days earlier every solar year*
Toot	10th or 11th September[2]	Muharram
Babah	10th or 11th October	Safar
Hatoor	9th or 10th November	Rabi Awwal
Kiyahk (kiyah)	9th or 10th December	Rabi Tani
Toobah	8th or 9th January	Jamad Awwal
Amsheer	7th or 8th February	Jamad Tani
Baramhat	9th March	Rajab
Baramoudah	8th April	Shaaban
Bashans	8th May	Ramadan
Baoonah	7th June	Shawwal
Abeeb	7th July	Zul Ka'dda
Misri	6th August	Zul Hijjah

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[1] Some of the Coptic Calendar months are certainly derived from names of ancient Egyptian deities, and this may be taken to indicate that this Calendar is older than the Coptic Church which still uses it to regulate its ecclesiastical year. The Coptic calendar starts from the year A.D. 284, the first year of the Roman Emperor Diocletian's reign, who persecuted the Christians in Egypt, and in commemoration of this event the Coptic Church adopted this year called 'The Year of the Martyrs' as the starting point for its calendar.

[2] Toot 1st begins on 11th September next to a Coptic leap year, or, when in the European Calendar, the following year is a leap year.

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few city-dwellers, as most of the products of the modern schools, are seldom acquainted with the names of these months, their functional importance is obvious to the greater part of the Egyptian rural population.

For the village boys, the memorizing of these month-names is greatly helped by the descriptive rhyming phrases that connect them with such significant climatic changes or agricultural events. The table opposite shows the Coptic months and the corresponding dates of the European calendar, as well as the Lunar calendar.

The following are the rhyming phrases connected with the Coptic months. It is to be noticed that they are connected either with the climatic conditions or with wheat in winter, or a kind of millet (different from the one grown after perennial irrigation was introduced) called 'damiri' and which used to be grown in autumn, lasting for two months.

Toot:
He is a fool who expects flood in Toot.

Babah:
If the millet's cob is not fully ripe in this month, not much harvest is to be expected.

Hatoor:
Hatoor calls the cold to commence.

Kiyah:
Compels the barking dog to sleep.[1]

Toobah:
In Toobah my ankle has never been wetted by water.[2]

Amsheer:
The first ten of Amsheer makes one's skin shiver (chopped).

Baramhat:
One can enter the field and get corn (corn begins to ripen).

Baramoudah:
The corn is gathered into heaps.

Bashans:
The chaff is taken away from the sun (loaded home).

Baoonah:
Full of hardship, and it is not advisable to eat eggs or fish (due probably to the excessive heat).

Abeeb:
One does not find it difficult to get dates.

Misri:
Between Misri and Abeeb, send they joy-cries, O beloved (the peak of the Nile flood). This applies, of course, to the days of the basin irrigation,

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[1] One of the boys added that in Kiyah the sleeping dog brings his head nearer to his tail.

[2] This is the period of drought called 'gafaf' during which the government allows no water to remain in the canals so that they may be cleaned out; thus water is not available for irrigation.

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APPENDIX II

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221 when the land used to be flooded with the water of the Nile during this period.[1]

Thus these phrases connected with the Coptic months contain some of the community's wisdom related to its technical activities, food consumption and indications of weather changes. It is worth noting that while there are no fixed dates in the Coptic Calendar for any specific agricultural activities, the latter are carried out within a certain time-limit, such as the beginning of a month or second week in a month or towards the end or before beginning of such and such a month, and so forth.

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241 The following is a seasonal calendar for the various types of farm work as regulated by the Coptic Calendar.

Coptic Months	*Agricultural Activities*
Toot	*The Winter Crop (Shitwi)* Either fallow land or early harvested millet: during the first ten days of the month land is sown with clover (berseem).
Babah	Sowing of wheat and barley (during the first ten days). First irrigation of beans and clover.
Hatoor	First irrigation of wheat and barley called 'cleaning irrigation'. Cutting clover before irrigation. Irrigation of beans.
Kiyah	Second irrigation of wheat and barley after distributing fertilizer. Cutting of clover for the second time.[1] Irrigation of beans and clover.
Toobah	Third irrigation of wheat, with fertilizer only for the weak section. Third irrigation of barley. Third cutting of clover. Irrigation of clover and beans.

[1] Clover is cut four times, at intervals of thirty days.

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Coptic Months	*Agricultural Activities*
Amsheer	Fourth irrigation of some wheat sections. Last cutting of clover. Boys begin to collect fertilizer for the summer crop.
Baramhat	Harvesting of barley and beans. Harvesting of early grown wheat.
Baramoudah	Harvesting of wheat. Clearing the land, and preparing soil by digging or ploughing it for the summer crop. By the end of the month the millet is sown.
Bashans	*The Summer Crop* First irrigation of millet after fertilizing. Second irrigation, as millet requires water every fifteen days.
Baoonah	Breaking up the soil, and weeding. Second irrigation after fertilizing. Third irrigation at the end of the month.
Abeeb	Fourth irrigation with fertilizer for weak plants. Fifth irrigation for some plants. Boys begin to collect fertilizer for winter crop.
Misri	Harvesting.

The calendar gives the main crops which practically every farmer in the village grows and which constitute his diet of wheat and barley bread in summer, and millet bread in winter. Apart from these, clover (berseem) forms the main feeding-stuff for the domestic animals in the winter, while chaff and the millet plant leaves serve as fodder in summer. 260 231

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796 The following is the lunar calendar and the main religious events connected with it.

Lunar Months	*Religious Events*
Muharram	First day of the month is celebrated as the beginning of the new year. Tenth occasions a 'Rahmat' meal on ' 'Ashoura'.[1]
Safar	—
Rabi Awwal	Celebration of the Prophet's birthday on the 12th.
Rabi Tani	—
Jamad Awwal	—
Jamad Tani	—
Rajab	A 'Rahmat' meal to commemorate the Prophet's journey from Medina to Jerusalem 'Israi' on 27th.
Shaaban	Meal and prayers on the 14th.
[785] Ramadan	The month of fasting.
Shawwal	On its first day is the breaking of the fast and the celebration of 'Id Ramadan, first feast.
[788] Zul Ka'dda	Preparation for pilgrimage.
Zul Hijjah	'Rhamat' meal on the 9th day called 'Arafat'. Tenth celebration of the Great Feast ('Id al Adha).

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[1] Ashoura is a Shiite event of lamentation and blood sacrifice to commemorate the death of Husain. In spite of the fact that the villagers are Sunnis (Malikites) they have a special meal to invoke God's mercy on their departed.

Appendix Three

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING IN SILWA

In discussing the standard of living in the village, the writer is aware that the term is essentially a relative or comparative one. Its application in such a manner is almost impossible as there is no way of comparing the present conditions of the village with those of the past or with those of the town. Certain changes in the demands of the peasants as a result of increasing contacts with town life will be discussed later; it is sufficient here to mention that the villagers, at least those who frequent the town, are aware of other standards of living to which they would like to attain. Consumption, production and human needs are sociologically relevant only in so far as they are related to a particular society. For a sociological enquiry human needs have no absolute validity independent of their cultural context and their knowledge by the members of that particular community. Beyond this any statements concerning minimum standard of living or basic needs inevitably imply a value judgment.[1] 511 [191]

Here the criterion to be adopted for the evaluation of the standard of living is an internal one; in other words, we are attempting to compute whether the land owned at present by the people in the village is sufficient to supply their needs as envisaged by the people themselves.

The main index for such an evaluation would be the relation between the average income and the average consumption *per capita*. The value of crops is estimated in the following computation according to 1951 prices. 434 511

The acre in winter crop produces on an average:[2]

Product		*Price per unit*[3] *in £E*	*Total*
4 ardabs of wheat	..	6	24
1 ardab of barley	..	3	3
1 ardab of beans	..	6	6
			£E33

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[1] See J. E. Goldthorpe, 'An Examination of the Concept of Need', *The Sociological Review*, Vol. XLII, Section 10, 1950. Also, M. Read, *Native Standards of Living*.

[2] As a rule, for winter crop, two-thirds of the acre is sown with wheat and the rest with barley and beans. [3] The Egyptian pound is almost equivalent to the English pound. [241] [436]

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[041]

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The summer crop is only of one kind, millet.[1]

Product		*Price per unit in £E*	*Total*
6 ardabs	..	3.50	£E 21

With every feddan a farmer can own the following animals:

1. A cow, which every two years would bring a calf worth £E6 income per year	3
2. A camel, which every three years would bring a camel worth £E6 per year	2
3. Five sheep, each bringing two lambs a year worth 30 piastres	3
Total income	£E8

Thus the total income from cultivating an acre and the profits derived from animals per year amounts to	..	£E61
Subtract for taxes and sowing seeds	..	1.50
Net income		£E59.50

And as the *per capita* property of land is about one-third of an acre, then the *per capita* income from agriculture is about £E20. Moreover, according to the Postmaster, the village received (during the period of my field work) between £E400 and £E600 per month from those relatives who work in town, which, distributed per head, would make the total income per head £E21 per year.

511 On the other hand, it was more difficult to assess the *per capita* consumption of food and goods. The difficulty is obvious in a community which is self-sufficing in many ways, and which keeps no written records of its budgets. Expenditure, however, does not vary considerably from person to person in the village, and the following estimate will give an approximate picture.

[593] The consumption of bread has been estimated on the surest criterion which is the amount of crop that a father allows his son in his marital residence to take to his wife and children.

Winter Harvest

Two-thirds ardab of wheat for the husband
One-half ardab of wheat for the wife
One-quarter ardab of wheat for the child under seven
One-half ardab of barley for the husband
One-half ardab of barley for the wife (and chicken)
One-quarter ardab of barley for the child
One-twelfth ardab of beans per person

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[262]
[231]

[1] Dates are not included here as they are usually consumed daily by the family. Berseem is not also included in winter crop, being consumed by animals.

APPENDIX III

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Average consumption is then:	*Price in £E*
One-half ardab of wheat per head	3
One-third ardab of barley per head	1
One-twelfth ardab of beans per head	1
Total	£E5

For the Summer Crop:

Two ardabs for husband
Two ardabs for wife (and chicken and sheep)
Half ardab for child

Average consumption one and five-sixths ardabs ..	6.50
Total expenditure on bread and beans	£E11.50

Expenditure on manufactured and prepared goods:

	£E
Clothes	4
Tea and sugar • ..	3
Soap, kerosene, etc. ..	1
	£E19.50

The income or expenditure does not include items such as vegetables, [441] e.g. onions and lentils, which are grown for home consumption. Yet two main items are not inserted: tobacco and meat. Meat purchases could be [262] offset by the sale of chickens and eggs, but certainly the use of tobacco [276] would raise the average consumption to £E20 at least.

It will be noticed that the expenditure on tea and sugar per head is [272] proportionately large. Tea, with plenty of sugar in it, and no milk, is the fellah's main liquid intake, as he can drink tea at any time. It [263] is almost one of the necessities of life in the village, and neither adults nor children seem to be able to do without it. Tea is taken at home [574] and 'lubricates the mouths' in formal and informal gatherings outside dwellings and in guest houses. Two decades ago, Ali told me that food was the attraction of such gatherings, but now tea has become the fashion. It is a disgrace to omit to offer tea to a visitor. If while serving tea, or a meal for that matter, to a guest, another visitor arrives unexpectedly, the host is obliged to make another pot of tea for him, or at least insist orally on making it, perhaps later; otherwise, the latter would feel offended and consider that he was offered 'chance-tea' (sadaf), as such an offer is not considered hospitality.

Looking at the villager's budget of £E21 income and £E21 consumption, one can appreciate the precariousness of his financial solvency; and in case of misfortune his budget could be easily upset and cause him to fall into debt, an abhorrent state of affairs. One of the fellah's maxims is that [426] 'debt is a worry at night and a humiliation during the day'.

APPENDIX III

511 In connection with the villager's consumption of food, a few remarks
146 on meat are relevant. Meat is a rare delicacy in his diet, offered usually on
[262] festival occasions and always served with wheat bread. One can assess the
amount of animal protein consumed by the quantity of meat sold on the
market day, the only day, apart from festival occasions, on which the
villager can eat meat. People in the village spend comparatively more on
their food on market day. In the market there have been for a long time
[963] five butchers, each slaughtering on the average three sheep weighing
thirty Egyptian pounds, making a total of 450 pounds. If this amount were
distributed among a population of 4,450, the weekly *per capita* consumption
of meat from the market would be less than one-tenth of a pound, i.e. less
than five and a half pounds per year. We may add to this poultry meat,
which does not exceed a number of thirty chickens for a family of five
throughout the whole year. This works out at six chickens per person a
year, each chicken weighing about a pound and a half. Then the total
annual consumption of meat per person would be fourteen and a half
pounds. This is certainly the maximum *per capita* consumption of meat, as
all the chickens in the house are not eaten by its members, for some are
sold to buy manufactured goods.[1]

According to the statistics of the Cairo Medical School—Kasr el-Aini—the fellah's diet mainly lacks proteins and fats, the deficiency in the former amounting to 20 per cent, and in the latter to 16 per cent.

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[1] Comparable data with regard to standard of living and other points related to livelihood in Silwa could be found in the series of Chinese studies on peasant life in China. Working out such comparisons here will take us outside the frame of reference in this work. Cf. Hsiao-Tung Fei, *Peasant Life in China*, London, 1939; Martin Yang, *A Chinese Village*, London, 1948; Hsiao-Tung Fei and Chih I. Chang, *Earthbound China*, London, 1949.

Appendix Four

A NOTE ON KINSHIP TERMS

After discussing the village social structure from a general viewpoint it is worth while describing the kinship terms. Though Professor Fortes considers the kinship terminology as a superficial way of approaching the social structure, it is a necessary approach, for they are handy techniques by which people sort out their relations with one another, and are accordingly able to assume the structural behaviour or produce the preferred responses.

Kinship terms in Silwa, as well as in the province of Aswan, are those generally used in Arabian society. The following list is an enumeration of these terms:

Om (class. Um): mother.
Jid (class. Jad): paternal grandfather (in inheritance procedures only he is referred to as 'regular grandfather': gid sahih).
Jid: maternal grandfather (distinguished from the paternal grandfather in inheritance procedures by calling him 'irregular grandfather': gid fasid).
'Am: father's brother, paternal uncle.
'Ammah: father's sister, paternal aunt.
Khal: mother's brother, maternal uncle.
Khalah: mother's sister, maternal aunt.
Wad 'Am (class. Ibn Am): father's brother's son—paternal cousin.
Bit 'Am (class. Bint 'am): father's brother's daughter.
Wad 'Ammah: father's sister's son.
Bit 'Ammah: father's sister's daughter.
Wad Khal: mother's brother's son—maternal cousin.
Bit Khal: mother's brother's daughter.
Wad Khalah: mother's sister's son.
Bit Khalah: mother's sister's daughter.
Akh: brother.
Akht (class. Ukht): sister.
'Adeel: wife's sister's husband. The word, literally 'balancing' in Arabic, indicating the equivalent and symmetrical position of the two husbands in the family.

APPENDIX IV

601 Silf: sister's husband.
Hama (clas. hamu): father-in-law.
Hamah: mother-in-law.
Naseeb: general category for male in-laws, literally meaning related.
Nasibah: general category for female in-laws.

It is also interesting to note that there is a distinction made between true brothers from the same parents called ‘Ashika’, and brothers from the father only, referred to occasionally as ‘sons of the father’. The uterine brother is also called brother, and in inheritance procedures he is referred to as ‘the concealed brother’. In the classical Arabic the grandson from the daughter is called ‘Sibt’, while that from the son is called ‘Hafeed’. These two terms are not used, however, in the village, the persons concerned being referred to as ‘wad bitty’ (‘my daughter's son’) and ‘wad walady’ (‘my son's son’). It is also significant to note the distinction between the patrilineal descent and the matrilineal descent. Relatives from the former are referred to as from the ‘ ‘Asaba’, which literally means ‘backbone’, while the latter are referred to as from the ‘lahma’ which means ‘flesh’.

Such precise and defined Arabian kinship terms have led anthropologists to include them in the ‘descriptive systems’. Yet distant relatives related to the patrilneal side, and of the father', or grandfather's generation, could be called ‘‘Am’ (paternal uncle), and less commonly ‘‘Ab’ (father) or ‘Gid’ (grandfather), and those on the mother's side are ‘Khal’. Sometimes for a more distant relative the villagers, as they put it, ‘calculate the degree’, and find out the relations by abbreviating or simplifying the genealogy, e.g. by considering cousins as brothers.

611 Though kindred is traced through both parents (bilateral), yet inheritance, and social groupings of the extended family, clan and section are based on the unilateral patrilineal principle of kinship.

[P.259]

Appendix Five

THE WOMAN WHO SPEAKS IN KORANIC QUOTATIONS[1A]

ABDULLAH IBN AL-MUBARAK relates: 'I intended to perform my 788
pilgrimage one year, so I joined the caravan that was going to 539
Mecca. On the way I overslept one night, only to find on my awaking that the caravan had left. While pursuing the caravan, I found a woman who had also lost her way. On my enquiring her name, she answered, "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful—and mention Mary in the Book".[1] So I knew that her name was Mary (Mariam). I offered her food, but she refused, saying, "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful—surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent God".[2] As I understood that she was fasting, I recited to her, "In the [785] name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful—but whoever among you is sick or on a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days".[3] To this she replied, "In the name of God . . . and that you fast is better for you if you know". Then I asked her whether she wanted to ride on my camel, and she recited, "In the name of God . . . and whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and he (or she) is a believer—these shall enter the Garden, and they shall not be dealt with a jot unjustly".[4] So I knew she wanted to ride, so I made the camel kneel for her to mount, and she recited, "In the name of God . . . say to the believing men that they cast down their looks, and guard their private parts: that is pure for them: surely Allah is aware of what they do".[5] Immediately I knew that she desired me to be modest, so I turned away my face while she mounted. While I was urging the camel to get up, she quoted, "In the name of God . . . Glory to Him who made this subservient to us, and we were not able to do it".[6] On the way I asked her whether she had any children and her answer was, "In the name of God . . . and mention Abraham in the Book: surely he was a truthful man, a Prophet".[7] "O John (Yahya), take

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[1] Koran, xix, 16.
[2] Koran, xix, 26.
[3] Koran, ii, 184.
[4] Koran, iv, 124.
[5] Koran, xxiv, 30.
[6] Koran, xliii, 13.
[7] Koran, xix, 41.

[1A] [For commentary on this story, see category 116, p.93-Ammar]

788 539 hold of the Book with strength, and We granted him wisdom while yet a child."[1] "And to Moses, Allah addressed His word, speaking (speaking to him)."[2] So I understood that she had three boys by the names of Ibrahim, Yahya, and Mousa. On asking her how her sons were occupied she replied, "In the name of God . . . and landmarks: and by the stars they find the right way".[3] So I knew that they worked as guides on the desert routes. We went on conversing till sunset, when I offered her food to break her fast, and in gratitude, she said, "In the name of God . . . and whatever good things you spend shall be paid back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged".[4]

'In the morning we reached Mariam's home, and I met her three sons, [574] who thereupon killed a ram, offering me a grand repast. Mariam herself invited me to eat, reciting, "In the name of God . . . eat and drink pleasantly for what you did".[5] Before I left their place, I asked her sons the reason for their mother's talking thus, always quoting from the Koran. They told me that, one day, while she was reading the Holy Book she came across the text, "He utters not a word, but there is by him a watcher at hand".[6] She immediately took a vow not to utter any statement from that time on which was not in the Koran, for fear of falling into sin.

'The following year, I went to call on Mariam at her house, and on finding her sons there, enquired about their mother. They told me she was on her death-bed. This saddened me, so I received permission to approach her, and drawing near her asked how she felt. She answered, "In the name of God . . . and the stupor of death will come in truth: that is what you shunned".[7] I remained at her side until she died, and then we washed her, wrapped her in her shroud, prayed over her, and buried her. I stayed alone beside her grave, and when night fell, I called out to her, "What has God done to you, Mariam?" I heard a faint voice answering as if from a distance, "In the name of God . . . and reward them, because they were patient, with Garden and silk".

'Reclining therein on raised couches, they shall find therein neither (the severe heat of) the sun nor the intense cold. And close down upon them (shall be) its shadows, and its fruits shall be made near (to them), being easy to reach. And there shall be made to go round about them vessels of silver and goblets which are of glass.

'(Transparent as) glass, made of silver, they have measured them according to a measure.

'And they shall be made to drink therein a cup, the admixture of which shall be ginger.

'(Of) a fountain therein which is named Salsabil.

'And round about them shall go youths never altering in age; when you see them, you will think them to be pearls, scattered, broadcast.

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[1] Koran, xix, 12.
[2] Koran, iv, 164.
[3] Koran, xvi, 16.
[4] Koran, ii, 272.
[5] Koran, lii, 19.
[6] Koran, l, 18.
[7] Koran, l, 19.

APPENDIX V

"And when you see these, you shall see blessings, and a great kingdom. 755

'Upon them shall be garments of fine green silk and thick silk interwoven with gold, and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord shall make them drink a pure drink. 539

'Surely this is a reward for you, and your striving shall be recompensed."[1]

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[1] Koran, xii, 21.

Appendix Six

SOME PROVERBS CURRENT IN THE VILLAGE

539 [197] BESIDES those proverbs mentioned in the main text of the thesis the following are specimens of proverbs in the village dialect. It is to be noted here that some of the Prophet's sayings as well as some Koranic statements are occasionally quoted in a proverbial sense, especially by literate people. For a compendium of Arabic proverbs, see J. L. Burckhardt, *Arabic Proverbs*, London, 1930; and for the colloquial Egyptian proverbs, especially in towns and cities, see M. Taimour, *al-Amthal al-'Amia* (Colloquial Proverbs), Cairo, 1950 (in Arabic).

Alli ma 'indush ma yilzamush.
He who has not, need not give.
Shatlak wala yidurrak.
What you plant shall never harm you.
Walad batny yiaraf ratny.
The son of my womb knows my language (lingo).
Nas ti'akkir wi nas tseed.
Some disturb the waters, others fish in them.
Kul shai gismah wi naseeb.
Everything is destined and is thus one's lot.
Alli yimil gantara lazim yithammal addoas.
He who makes a bridge of himself must bear the treading. (Said about a person who assumes the role of leadership with its concomitant responsibilities.)
'Ind ashadaid t'uraf al ikhwan (clas. Arabic).
Adversities are the test of brothers (or friends).
Khisla fi al abai yarithuha al abnai (clas. Arabic).
A trait in the fathers is inherited by their sons.
Addonia bimal.
Life is burdensome.
Addahab yihtaj li assunkhal.
Gold requires the bran (wherein it can be hidden and preserved). (In other words the leaders of people need the support of the led and the less distinguished of their people.)

APPENDIX VI

Annas bi annas.

People can live through co-operating with, and consideration for, others (said to sanction the exchange of social obligations).

Alli yisheel girbah tnaggit alaih.

He who carries a water-skin must expect to get wet (or to get some water slopped on him).

Mid ryjlak 'ala gadr ghatak.

Stretch your legs according to the size of your blanket. (Cut your coat according to your cloth.)

Kulluh indal Arab saboon.

It is all soap for the Arabs (said for those who cannot discriminate in matters of clothes, food or social matters).

Alli y'ieeb, y'ieeb fi nafsu.

He who insults others, insults himself.

Min jawar al-haddad yibla bi naru.

He who is a neighbour of a blacksmith must suffer from the furnace.

Addunia bi khairha.

There is still goodwill on earth (when someone becomes suspicious of others).

Man taradda bi ridai lam yatraddah abeeh, yati 'alaih zaman yatamanna al moat feeh.

He who wears a robe that his father did not wear before him will witness a day in which he would desire death.

Annasab nashab wa in sah yibga ahliyah.

Marriage may bring wealth, and if it succeeds may become like kinship bonds.

Naseeb wa 'azz an-nasab, wi gaid himartu 'azz min al-walad.

My son-in-law is very much admired, and the rope that tethers his donkey is dearer to me than my son (said by mother-in-law).

Addukhool fi as shibak hain, at-tammul fi al-khurooj.

Getting entangled is easy, the difficulty is getting out.

Bab yijeeb ar-reeh, siduh wi astareeh.

A door lets in the wind, better close it and be comfortable. (It is better to prevent causes of friction.)

In ligeet ghadir fi tareeg wadi gul laih attareeg ma'ak.

If you meet a stray person in the desert, tell him that he is following the correct route.

Asseet wala al ghina.

Have reputation rather than wealth.

Ma ynoub alli yihajjiz illa tagtei hdoumoh.

The mediator trying to separate the two opponents would gain nothing but torn clothes.

Khud ma ataak wa atruk ma fatak.

Take what is coming and abandon what is past.

Ya ma nas marmar 'atabha, sakanu luhoud at taraib.

APPENDIX VI

539 Many were the people whose thresholds were made of marble, but who had to be buried in dust.

Alli yibus fi balawi ghairuh, tilhoun 'alaih balaweeh.
He who considers other people's sufferings, would alleviate his own.

Aih yakhud ar reeh min al balaat.
What can the wind scour from floor paving? (You cannot get blood out of a stone.)

Min 'ashar al goam arbaeen yom, ya sar, ya asbah minhum.
He who associates with a group of people for forty days would then either depart, or become one of them.

Alli laih kabeer ma yendaribshy 'ala dahru.
He who has a patron would not have his back beaten.

Alli maloosh kabeer yishtari laih kabeer.
He who has no patron should find one (lit. buy one).

Kul fula wi laha kayyal.
Every kind of bean has a special person to appreciate it (lit. assess it).

Kul sagtah wi laha lagtah.
Everything that falls has got a gatherer.

Al 'ajalah min ashaitan.
Haste is of the devil.

Yinfa'ak dahabak das, wi waladak min dahrak bas, wi tourak min bagarak.
You can only rely on your hidden gold, your child descending from your loins and your calf from your cow.

Sahib balain kaddab, sahib talatah mundfig.
He who has two minds is a liar, he who has three is a hypocrite (usually said about a person who marries more than one wife).

Al khaly yigool 'ads.
The one who is indifferent would say it is lentils (said to a person who tries to underestimate the difficulties of another). The proverb is related of a person who committed adultery in the fields during harvest time; he was pursued by another. During his flight he gathered a handful of lentils. On being caught he was asked why he was pursued; his answer was that because he had stolen a handful of lentils. Yet the pursuer said, 'Of course those who have not seen what he did would say it is a handful of lentils'.

Girat haz wala faddan shatarah.
A small amount of luck (a 'kirat' is one twenty-fourth of a feddan) is better than a lot of hard work (feddan).

Al jahil 'adow nafsu.
The child is the enemy of himself (his own well-being).

[538] For a study of proverbs and proverbial statements, see Edward Westermarck, *Wit and Wisdom in Morocco*, London, 1930. From our list of proverbs we have omitted also those included in this book, e.g. 'Learning is better than goods; 'When the bull falls down, the daggers are many'; 'What the

eye does not see, the heart does not grieve for;' 'The funeral is great, 539 and the deceased is a dog';[1] 'He fasted and fasted and breakfasted on an onion,'[2] etc.

No attempt at any theoretical study of proverbs or any kind of classification 538 has been made here. Reference can be made to the masterly way that Westermarck has treated the subject throughout his work, especially in the Introductory Essay.

Here we can only point to the fact emphasized by Westermarck, that a people's proverbs cannot be taken as indicative of their character without full knowledge of other facts that the proverbs do not state.[3]

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[1] It is 'mouse' in Morocco.

[2] In Morocco it is 'He remained fasting for a year and breakfasted on snails'.

[3] For examples see Westermarck, *op. cit.*, pp. 52–4.

Appendix Seven

BOYS' RIDDLES

(mainly in the adolescent stage)

539 'One measure of clover covering this world and the hereafter.'
524 *Answer:* (Stars.)

'Something which looks like a man's covering which is woven neither by a Moslem nor by a Christian.'

(Loofah.)

'How many cups are in the sea?'

(The sea is that of knowledge and contains four cups which are the four schools of Moslem theology: the schools of Malik, Al Shafii, Abu Hanifa, and Ibn Hanbal.)

'How many "Kintars" are there in the "mountain"?'

(The mountain here is the Koran, so the mountain contains 114 'Kintars', as the Koran consists of 114 chapters.)

'How many "Kasabas"[1] are there in the universe?'

(There are fourteen 'Kasabas' in the universe: seven heavens and seven earths.)

'A tree that contains twelve branches and on every branch there are thirty leaves.'

(The lunar year—in fact, however, the lunar months are of thirty and twenty-nine days alternately.)

'Riding his mother and protected by his father.'

(The bullet in a gun.)

'A cripple who walks, a blind man who sees, a barren person who is pregnant, if she continues to be thirsty she survives, and with her the child she bears, but if she drinks, she dies and with her dies her child.'

(The laden boat at sea.)

'A boy and his sister, and a wife and her husband, amongst whom one distributes three oranges, each one getting a whole orange.'

(The sister of the boy is at the same time the husband's wife.)

'There was a wolf, a ram and some clover, and a man wanted to take them across from one side of the river to the other, provided he takes only one of them at a time. How could he manage that without losing any of these things, e.g. letting the wolf eat the ram, or the ram eat the clover?' 539 524

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[1] A Kasaba is a length measure of 355 centimetres.

(He takes the ram first to the other bank and leaves it there. Then takes the wolf, leaving it there, taking the ram back with him to where it was. Then takes the clover across to the other side, leaving it beside the wolf, and returning to fetch the ram.)

'Our white camel scatters its feeding-stuff,
Our black camel gathers its feeding-stuff.'

(White camel is daytime when people disperse for work, whereas the black camel represents night when people gather for chatting.)

'The land is white, the sowing seeds are black, the cows are five, and the plough is one.'

(This is a representation of the hand (five fingers) writing in ink (black sowing seeds) with a pen (one plough) on a white sheet of paper (white land).)

'A boy with scabies rubs his head on another scabby head, and from too much rubbing the heads fall down piece by piece.'

(The upper and lower stones of a handmill grinding flour.)

'Ninety knights who run in one vessel.'

(The two wheels of the water-wheel, the upper horizontal wheel containing fifty teeth, and the lower vertical one containing forty, and both being in the well.)

'A white billy-goat, with red ears.'

(The 'maktaf' (basket) made of whitish palm-tree leaves, with two handles made of brownish palm-tree fibre.)

'Shakes his head while filling his belly.'

(The spindle.)

'Abuyah kitir malu
'ala akhti katabnalu
al bit jabat walad ya zein af'alu
baga abuyah[3] wibn akhti wana khalu.'

'Abuyah has plenty of money.
We've got him wed to my sister.
She had a child, who's done himself well.
He's the brother of Yah (Akhuyah), he's my cousin and I'm his maternal uncle.'

(Here the play is on the words Abuyah (first line) and Akhuyah (fourth line), where the former word means 'Father of Yah' and 'my father' and the latter word means 'brother of Yah' and 'my brother'.)

[3] [apparently this should read Akhuyah--analyst]

Appendix Eight

THE STEWART EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TEST

SAMPLES OF TEST RESPONSES

125 Tests have been recently adopted by some social anthropologists:

1. To provide quick means for collecting useful material in relatively little time.
2. To draw the attention of the field worker to data which otherwise might escape notice.
3. To be used as an objective check on one's own impressions, especially in the field of culture-personality relationship.
4. To provide means of quantitative analysis.

Tests, however, must be interpreted in their cultural context. Leighton and Kluckhohn assert that tests hold considerable promise in anthropological research, but owing to their present state of imperfection, must be used in conjunction with material obtained by the usual anthropological techniques of observation and interview.[1]

1. The Stewart Emotional Response Test

159 125 This test is a series of questions asking for experiences associated with five emotions: happiness, sadness, fear, anger, and shame, one question asking for the best thing that could happen to the child, and another asking for the worst that could happen.[2] After administering the test on twelve children, the responses of the following five children were chosen on the grounds of being the most complete performance. Three boys disclaimed their experience of such emotions, while others gave confused answers.

[156] No girls' responses are recorded here. I found them most frustrating in this respect, except in the Rorschach ink-blots. Young girls were 'giggly'; older ones were shy and uneasy. Their way out was 'I don't know; I am not a man'. They probably refused to co-operate because the tests were first administered on the boys from whom they heard about them. After

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[1] D. Leighton and C. Kluckhohn, *Children of the People*, p. 223.

[2] Ibid., p. 247.

trying this test on five girls, and the Moral Ideology test on two other 159
girls, I had to give up trying any more. It certainly requires more time and [125]
patience than I could then afford to elicit responses from girls. These verbal tests must have seemed to them fruitless and pointless.

For happiness

A. *A boy of seven years:*
  1. When we celebrated the feast, we played and went to visit the 'Sahabi'.
  2. When I go out to play without taking my younger brother with me.
  3. Nothing.

B. *A boy of nine years:*
  1. When my maternal uncle returns from Alexandria.
  2. When my grandfather comes from Port Fouad where he works at present. He has been away for a long time; we want him at home.
  3. When my brother was circumcised.

C. *A boy of twelve years:*
  1. When his father sent him to the Kuttab.
  2. When he eats meat with 'Sakhini' and 'Gras' (sing. 'Gurs'). ('Sakhini' are onions cooked in oil, and 'Gras' are wheat loaves.) [262]
  3. When the feast comes, there is no work for him and he does not go to school.

D. *A boy of fourteen years:*
  1. When they circumcised his brother and paraded around the village in a ceremony.
  2. When he went to the Kuttab.
  3. When the harvest time comes (time of plenty) and when 'the "baraka" of God' is in the house.

E. *A boy of fifteen years:*
  1. When he went to Cairo, and saw the palaces,[1] cars and the Zoo.
  2. When his father wanted to examine him in the Koran, threatening to punish him if he found that he did not know it well, but he was all right, so he was happy.
  3. When his father bought him a new garment and a pair of sandals.

For sadness, fear, anger and shame

A. *A boy of seven years:*
  1. I was sad when my grandmother died.
  2. I shall be sad if my father dies.
  3. I become angry when my parents beat me.
  4. When other boys strike me I become angry, so I fight them.

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[1] Modern houses of the city are usually referred to by the villagers as 'palaces'. [369]

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5. I shall be angry if I have to leave the Kuttab.
6. I am afraid of the Ghost (Sul) and the shadows at night. I am also afraid of the scorpion and the snake.

B. *A boy of nine years:*

1. I became sad when the cow I was taking to the canal to drink, trod down the field and spoilt some of the plants; then my father came and brought it out from the plants.
2. When the ball I am playing with lands on top of the roof of a house which is not our house. Then I become afraid of climbing the walls to retrieve it.
3. I become afraid when I beat another boy and he goes to tell my father.
4. I felt angry when an older boy struck me, so I told my father to beat him.

C. *A boy of twelve years:*

1. When his father does not give him money to spend on sweets on market day he becomes sad and goes to his mother.
2. When his father sees him playing with other boys whilst he should be working, he threatens and frightens him.
3. He becomes angry when his father quarrels with his mother, spilling food and throwing it away.

D. *A boy of fourteen years:*

1. He was sad when he went to the field, and on his return home discovered that he brought clover for the sheep, but forgot to bring vegetables for his mother.
2. He is sad when he is beaten without reason.
3. He gets angry when someone curses his father. It is only the illegitimate child who can hear his father being cursed and does nothing about it. To curse one's father is as blasphemous as cursing one's religion.
4. He would feel ashamed if he went about in rags.

E. *A boy of fifteen years:*

1. I am afraid of Our God (Rabbana), and of father, and of those who are older than I am.
2. I am afraid of the cold, of hunger, and of not being properly clothed (lit. naked—'Iryan).
3. I am angry when I forget to say my prayers.
4. I would be ashamed if I had not had my hair cut.
5. I would be ashamed when my sister grew up and her breasts became conspicuous and she was still not married. Other boys would shame me by drawing my attention to my unwanted sister (lit. barren—bayri).[1]

When asked 'What is the best thing that could happen to you?' the previous boys gave the following answers:

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[1] The same word applies to the uncultivated land.

APPENDIX VIII

A. *A boy of seven years:*
To be able to play ball with other boys, without the interference of my younger brother.[1]

B. *A boy of nine years:*
When I find money dropped on the ground, or left around after the market.

C. *A boy of twelve years:*
When I have a good meal with lots of meat.

D. *A boy of fourteen years:*
What do I want more than sufficient 'food and drink'?[2]

E. *A boy of fifteen years:*
To be rich and endowed with 'baraka', and so be able to help the poor and feed the hungry.

When asked 'What is the worst thing that could happen to you?' the same boys gave these instances:

A. To be stung by a scorpion.
B. To be thrashed by my father.
C. That someone younger than I slaps me on the face and I am unable to retaliate.
D. To die in a fire or drown at sea.
E. To see my mother ill. To work as hired labourer on another person's land (not his father's).

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[1] This boy gave almost this response twice, an acute symptom of sibling rivalry.

[2] This is an idiomatic Arabic phrase: the word drink cannot, of course, have the English connotation of intoxicant.

Appendix Nine

MORAL IDEOLOGY TEST

BAVELAS MORAL IDEOLOGY TEST

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This test is designed to ascertain the public official moral ideas of the group. The child is asked for three things that would be considered good for him or for a boy of his age to do; and for the same number of things that would be considered bad to do. The individual responses are taken to indicate not just how the child acts in a given situation, but how he thinks people in general want him to act.[1]

The first part of the test was elicited in this way: 'What could you or a boy of your age do that would be a good thing for which father, the family or the people would praise you? Mention three things.'[2]

A. *Age Nine:*
   1. Go on errands for my parents, buying tea and sugar for mother and cigarettes for father.
   2. Memorize my assignment of the Koran.
   3. I don't know anything else.

B. *Age ten:*
   1. To take the cow to the farm and feed it.
   2. What else? There is nothing more pleasing to father than this.
   3. To lead the blind on the way.

C. *Age thirteen:*
   1. To go straight without making trouble with other boys.
   2. To fetch water home.
   3. Attend to the animals in the field and at home.

D. *Age thirteen:*
   1. To attend to his work.
   2. Not to beat younger children.
   3. To keep quiet and not play, as such conduct pleases his father.

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[1] Alex Bavelas, 'A Method for Investigating Individual and Group Ideology', in *Sociometry*, Vol. V, 1942.

[2] The five boys tested here are not the same boys tested previously.

E. *Age sixteen:*
  1. To fetch fertilizer from the hills.
  2. To be a 'pious boy' and obey his parents.
  3. To save a swimmer who is in danger of being drowned.

Each of the same boys were asked: 'What could you or a boy of your age do that would be a bad thing, that makes father, family or other people think badly of you? Mention these things.'

A. *Age nine:*
  1. To hit my younger brother.
  2. Not to share food with him on being asked by my mother.
  3. To be greedy in eating.

B. *Age ten:*
  1. To neglect his work and play.
  2. To break things.
  3. To drop and lose money on being sent to buy something from the shop.

C. *Age thirteen:*
  1. Not to feed the animals.
  2. Not to fetch water.
  3. To curse one's religion.

D. *Age thirteen:*
  1. To swear at one's parents.
  2. To play, for play makes one forget the Koran that one has memorised.
  3. I don't know.

E. *Age sixteen:*
  1. Not to be a good Moslem by not saying his prayers, and if having much money not helping the poor.
  2. To be envious of other people.
  3. To smoke and to tell lies.

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Appendix Ten

STORY COMPLETION TEST

159 [125] THE story completion test, composed of nine stories, is based on the pattern of stories devised by Pintner for the assessment of various aspects of the child's personality, e.g. attitude towards authority, moral tendencies, interests, wishful thinking, fears and anxieties.[1] Such aspects of the personality are not only important from the psychological, but also from the sociological viewpoint. The writer considers the use of such tests as relevant material for this study. Some of Pintner's stories were adapted, two were omitted, and story 5 was added. The test was administered in the following way. Every boy was told, 'I am going to start a story, and I want you to complete it in whatever way you like'. The boys were encouraged and occasional prompting was necessary on some points.

The following are the stories:

1. Once there was a boy sitting outside the house. He was not playing with other boys, but was staying all alone by himself. . . . (Why?)[2]
2. One day the parents of this boy got angry with him. . . . (What was it about? What happened? How did it end?)
3. The boy went to fetch water from the Nile on donkey-back. But on the way the water-jars were broken. . . . (What happened afterwards? Who punished him?)
4. In the street the boy was fighting with another boy. A man passed. . . . (What happened then?)
5. The boy saw his younger brother playing with a ball. . . . (What did he do?)
6. This boy had a friend he liked very much. One day he said to him: 'You come with me, and I'll show you something, but you mustn't tell anyone because it's a secret.' . . . (What did he show him? What did they do?)

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[1] R. Pintner, 'Four Retests of a Personality Inventory', in *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. XXIX, 1938. These tests were pointed out to the writer by Dr. Ramzy of the Institute of Education, Cairo, who used them in his thesis 'An Experiment in Assessing Personality', London, 1948 (unpublished Ph.D. thesis).

[2] The bracketed questions are examples of the promptings.

7. It was night. The boy was sleeping, and suddenly he woke up screaming. . . . (What made him wake up? What was the matter?) 159
8. One night the boy dreamt he saw the angels during his sleep. They asked him to pray for something he wanted. . . . (What did he pray for?)
9. This boy is growing up. He likes to be a man. . . . (What would he like to do?)

The story completion test was given to seven boys and five of them gave the following satisfactory completions: [125]

A. *Age nine:*

1. He does not play with the other boys because they are older than he is, and he is waiting for a boy of his age to match him in the game.
2. His parents were angry because he returned late after being sent on an errand, and rebuked him for talking to other children on the way.
3. When he breaks the water-jars his mother beats him and deprives him of food.
4. The man beats the two boys who were quarrelling, tells their fathers about this, the fathers will beat their sons.
5. He would not let his younger brother play with the ball, and immediately he sees him playing, he would send him on an errand.
6. I don't know what he said to the other boy.
7. He cried, 'Oh! Father.' He imagined a wolf or a ghost or thieves breaking into the house. He feared the dark and said, 'In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful'.
8. He prayed for a good garment and a fez.
9. I don't know.

B. *Age nine:*

1. The boy does not play with the other boys because they usually strike him; they do not speak to him, nor does he speak to them or sit near them. But later on he finds another boy with whom he is on good terms and plays with him.
2. The parents got angry with the son, and hence did not feed him. This was because the boy did not obey his parents' commands, and such disobedience would bring God's anger. The boy had to go to some relatives to get food, but when his parents did not find any boy to run an errand for them, they brought him back to the house, and fed him, and thus they were reconciled.
3. When the boy broke the water-jars he went weeping to his mother, who asked him how this happened. The mother became angry and struck him for his negligence.
4. When the man saw those boys quarrelling, he separated them,

159 and asked them to go away. But when the man was out of sight, the two boys returned to resume their fight. When one of them started to cry, the other fled, for if he waited, the father of the former boy would have caught him and struck him.

5. When the older boy found the ball with his brother, he snatched it from him; the younger boy started to cry. When the mother asked the older boy to give it back to his brother, he did. But when the mother went out, the older boy took the ball again and ran outside the house with it, looking proud and happy. The other boys asked him to show it to them and play together with it. When he returned home his mother spat in his face for taking the ball from his brother. He said that he did not take it, but it was given to him by his brother, who did not want it any more. Then the mother told him that he was a liar and asked him to hand the ball back to his brother.
6. When the two boys talked secretly, one of them warned the other against their enemy. They decided not to talk or sit with him or show him anything they had.
7. He screamed, saying that he felt some people trampling over him, and on asking them who they were, they refused to answer him. Then he shouted to be rescued: 'Oh, the One (Yawahid)' (a way of imploring God when in a state of distress, or when frightened, especially used in the village to summon other people for help, who on hearing such a cry, would immediately go to see what had happened). [192] [195]
8. He prayed for gold, clothes, shoes and socks.
9. He wants to grow up to farm and grow corn and go to Cairo. He also wants to get married. He does not want to become an old man with a bent back who is going to die.

C. *Age fourteen:*

1. The boy is angry because the other boys do not play with him.
2. He cursed his father and mother and thus made them angry. They thrashed him, and when he cried they sent him outside the house 'for the dogs to eat him'.
3. When the boy broke the jars, he was never sent again to fetch water, and his sister had to do it instead.
4. He interfered between the two boys, gave each a slap on the face and cursed their fathers.
5. The older boy took the ball from his younger brother to play with it himself. The father came and thrashed the older boy and rebuked him for being jealous of his younger brother.
6. He showed the other boy a place where gold was hidden. After collecting the gold, they sold it and with the money bought clothes, cars and bicycles.
7. He was afraid that they might be thieves who would beat him,

and the people gathered to his rescue after he shouted 'Oh, the One'.

8. He prayed to God to make him find a hidden treasure.
9. He wants to grow up to take over his father's work in the farm, while his father remains in the village.

D. *Age fifteen:*

1. The boy must have been beaten by somebody; or the boys who are playing must be stronger than he, and might have torn his clothes.
2. After his parents were angry with him, he had to leave the village, looking for livelihood somewhere else. After some time he got homesick, as he remembered his family and people, so he started to send money and letters to his parents trying to make up for his desertion. When he returned to the village, the parents were happy as their son had 'redeemed' himself. The grandparents and the maternal aunts helped to bring about this reconciliation.
3. His mother asked him how the jars were broken. She thought that her boy was affected by 'the evil eye' of other women. So she asked him to step over the fire in which she had sprinkled salt which was cracking. If his father heard about his breaking of the jars he would have beaten him; mothers are affectionate.
4. If the man had passed by without separating or quietening the fighting boys, he would have been blamed for that.
5. He plays with his younger brother and appeases him with the ball, so his mother might be able to get on with her cooking.
6. He took the other boy away to a secret place to tell him about his enemy who wants to kill him.
7. A thief must have attacked the boy, so that he cried out to wake up his family to rescue him. He may be crying with pain (sick).
8. He wants to find gold and become rich and to be able to wear fine clothes.
9. He wants to grow up and become a pious man, get married and perform his pilgrimage.

E. *Age sixteen:*

1. He did not play with the other boys because he was a 'polite' boy and did not wish to cause any trouble to his people.
2. The boy quarrelled with the other boys and his parents became angry with him. He fled to another place to find work. His parents were worried about his flight, and sent telegrams to 'the government'. Later on he returned to the village and his parents accepted him (lit. collected him) for fear of shame.
3. When the water-jars were broken the boy went home crying and his mother consoled him by saying, 'It does not matter, this is a "sacrifice" (fida) for you. It's a "baraka" that the evil eye hit the jars and not you. Your neck could have been broken.'

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159 4. The man cuffed the two boys and gave them a lesson on how to be polite. He told them if someone cursed you or your father it is better to say 'May God forgive you', because the curse is actually inflicted on the person who curses, so it is better for him not to hit back, otherwise the curse will return on him.

5. He took the ball from his younger brother, and asked him to go to the Kuttab.

6. He must have told the other boy about money the former stole from his mother. The other boys on hearing this, said, 'With this money buy us something sweet to eat'.

7. The boy was frightened because he was 'seized' by a saint, vows to whom his parents had not fulfilled.

8. The boy prayed to enter paradise, be freed from disease and have no enemies.

9. He wants to grow up and memorise the Koran.

Appendix Eleven

A NOTE ON SOME DREAMS COLLECTED IN THE VILLAGE

DREAMS are considered to be of value as a means of obtaining useful ethnological material, and thus could serve purposes similar to those of tests. The significance of dreams is hence relevant data for our study. It must be pointed out here that the writer was not fully aware of the importance of such data while he was in the field, and for this reason he did not collect enough dreams, and the ones recorded here are all those collected, without any selection. 159

In Silwa, women are reputed to be more capable of dreaming than men; they are also known to be better interpreters. Boys and girls do not communicate their dreams either to their parents or to other boys and girls. It was a great surprise for them to be asked to recollect dreams, and much effort was required by them to recall them. 159 [illegible] [illegible]

It is believed that dreams are inspired by angels, or at least they are caused by some vaguely defined supernatural forces. The importance of dreams, especially as a means of forecasting future happenings, receives its religious justification from the story of the Prophet Joseph related in the Koran showing his infallible insight in interpreting dreams. At least, among men in the village, it is believed that the dreams of a person who sleeps ritually clean are truer than those of one who is not in the same state.

As in Tikopia, the weight attached to a dream varies according to the intensity of the personal situation at the time; a dream receives more credence in so far as it can be related to some question immediately at issue.[1] When a person is in a critical situation, e.g. financial difficulty, absence of a son, expecting decision in a law suit, or in the case of a pregnant woman, he or she does not only pay considerable attention to dreams, but asks relatives and friends to dream for him or her. On their part, such relatives and friends volunteer to tell such a person about dreams in which he or she may appear.

There is a certain formal technique of interpreting dreams, especially amongst women, which the writer did not investigate. The narration of ([illegible])

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[1] Raymond Firth, 'The Meaning of Dreams in Tikopia', in *Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*, ed. by E. Evans-Pritchard *et al.*, London, 1934, p. 63.

APPENDIX XI

The narration of

159 dreams usually starts by saying, 'I dreamt, May God render it good and blissful' (Allahum ijalu khair wazain), the listener usually answers, 'Good, if God wills' (khair insha Allah).

It is worth noting here that most of the dreams recorded reflect in their manifest content many features of the waking life in the village. As for their latent content, it is left to the psychologist to see in it the working of the unconscious.[1] The writer is aware of the lack of associations related to the 'working situation' of these dreams to render their psychological interpretation adequate.[2]

In some of these dreams, however, one cannot fail to recognize representations of imaginary fulfilment of ungratified wishes, sexual and otherwise, e.g. performing pilgrimage, eating meat, receiving money.

In children's dreams especially, one is struck by the strong indications and symbols, without much secondary elaboration or distortion, of anxiety, fear, and ambivalence. Anxiety and repressed fear of authority are reflected in symbols such as that of the child's fear of his head being cut off by the barber (a dream of the castration anxiety type); rolling down the sloping ground and dying (No. 2; if ground symbolizes mother this dream reflects uncertainty about mother's affection and hence an ungratified wish); being stung by a scorpion, which may be taken as a symbol of father and authority, but the boy was not dead; he was on a bed in a dark room, which represents the mother (wish for regression, No. 8). Ambivalence is obvious in dream No. 1, where an unconscious fear of the father (barber) is combined with another wish to please the father by fetching water; and also in dream 5, where ambivalence is reflected in indications of sibling rivalry for the father's love.

Such repressed desires and resentments reflect some of the unconscious pressures in the process of growing up, and to some of which allusions were made previously.

BOYS' DREAMS

Age eight:

One day I was going towards the fields when I found the son of the village barber cutting off the heads of some people with his razor. He approached me while I was on donkey-back and told me that he wanted to cut off my head too. I entreated him not to, for I was going to fetch water for my people, whereupon he let me go.

Age nine:

I was once sleeping on a mat on sloping ground. Suddenly I began to roll down, and died.

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[1] 'No wish . . . is able to produce a dream unless it is either unconscious or else associated with an allied unconscious one.' Ernest Jones, *Papers on Psycho-Analysis*, London, 1938, p. 265.

[2] Géza Róheim (ed.), 'Dream Analysis and Field-work in Anthropology', in *Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*, Vol. I, New York, 1947, pp. 87–130.

APPENDIX XI

Age fourteen:

I was once in the fields when suddenly a group of people drew near to me. I started to run and they pursued me, but I escaped.

Age ten:

I dreamt we had many chickens and ducks. One day my mother went to feed and water them, but she found that they were all dead. This was by 'God's will', for they were not eaten by a wolf or anything else.

Age twelve:

I dreamt that I was catching fish in the pond near the railway station. When I had caught a fish I went to show it to my father. Beside me there were two other boys fishing. When I caught a big fish and I wanted to show it to my father, the two boys snatched it and ran away.

Age ten:

I dreamt that I was looking for stray money after market day. Every time I searched I found a coin which I put in a tin with a lid. At last I filled the tin with money which became my property.

Age fifteen:

There were black monkeys swimming in the canal and people were trying to catch them. But every time they attempted it, the monkeys dived into the water. At last they managed to get hold of them, took them out of the water and tied them to a tree. Later, they released the monkeys and made them fetch grass and clover from the field for the cows.

Age twelve:

I dreamt that I was stung by a scorpion. Then I was put on a bed with a mat on it in a dark room. People thought I had died and set up a wailing for me, but I was not dead.

Age fifteen:

I dreamt that my father returned from Cairo with another man. He brought me three pairs of shoes, four gallabiahs, a turban and a cap. My father himself was wearing a new pair of shoes and a new turban. And I also dreamt that when I got up in the morning I could not find my father.

GIRLS' DREAMS

Age eleven:

Once I dreamt that I fell into a pond, through my foot slipping. With me, at the time, were other girls who did not help me, but I managed to get out by myself.

Age twelve:

Once I was attacked by a monster with bulging eyes, protruding teeth and jet black skin. While it was getting ready to strike me, I began to weep.

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Age thirteen:

159 I dreamt once that I saw the Prophet under a green dome. Then I called upon my sisters to come and shake hands with the Prophet saying, 'He is like my father, but better than him(?)'

Age ten:

Once I was crossing a very large bridge, and suddenly it collapsed and I was drowning in the canal. I cried, 'O father, O people, come and rescue me'.

Age twelve:

Once I dreamt that I found a pigeon which took me on pilgrimage. Whilst I was in Mecca I found a treasure. Then I returned home on the pigeon's back. Later on I took my grandmother, maternal aunt and my sister to visit Hijaz (Holy Places). We spent the treasure on building a big palace. Then suddenly a lion appeared; I was so frightened that I woke up.

Age ten:

One day I was sitting in the street looking at a book. Then came 'azzabbal' (trader who collects chicken droppings in exchange for female wares, e.g. needles, thread, salt, spices), and reminded me of the book I had promised to give him, but I told him that I could not give him any book, for fear of the teacher. Then 'azzabbal' took me on to the top of a wall and threw me into the river. I remained swimming around for a long time without knowing where to go, till I woke up.

MEN'S DREAMS

Age about twenty-eight, my informant Ali:

I dreamt that my father and mother-in-law had been preparing themselves to perform pilgrimage to Mecca. I asked my wife, then, to prepare food for me to join them on their journey, and the three of us went to the shrines of the Holy Places.

Age twenty-eight, Ali:

I dreamt that I was attacked by a bull with big horns. He trampled on me but I managed to escape for a while. The bull persisted in pursuing me. At last I held him by the horns which he kept on shaking in attempting to free himself, but I jumped on his back. It ran towards the Nile, and as he dived into the water, I jumped off on to land and escaped.

Age twenty-five:

One day I found a stray camel running loose into our farm. I went towards the camel to drive it away from the field. But all of a sudden I saw a naked man who said that he was the owner of the camel, and warned me against doing any harm to his animal. Then I grabbed the man by the neck and we began hitting each other. After he suffered from

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954

MR13 Fellahin MR13

Silwa

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my beating he fled. (This young man told me that he found this dream difficult to interpret, so he related it to a person who is known to be good [789] in interpreting dreams. The latter told him that the camel was his 'karina'; and everybody has a 'karina' that follows him in his life and causes him a lot of trouble and needs to be propitiated.)

Age twenty-two, just married and had a newly-born girl:[1]

I dreamt that my wife was pregnant, and she brought forth a boy. When I consulted my father about naming him, he insisted on calling him by the name 'Moṣtafa'[2] but I wanted to give him another name, and there was disagreement between my father and me. (The man connected this dream with the fact that later on his wife brought forth a girl whom he [789] called Zainab, and that his father fell ill.)

Age forty-five:

I dreamt that I was transformed into a 'green sparrow', and that on the Night of Kadr (the night of the 27th of Ramadan)[3] I entered Paradise where I stayed for seven years. Overwhelmed by the vastness of Paradise I enquired whether there was an end to it, and I was told that it had no end, and that there was neither sun nor moon; there one suffers neither heat nor cold; people sleep on couches; there are palaces the like of which have never been built on earth, fruits that have never been grown on this planet. While I was told all this, two people were holding me, one by the right arm, and the other by the left. But all of a sudden, a man came from behind me and pushed me out of Paradise saying, 'You don't deserve it yet'. (He commented that after this God helped him to perform his [789] pilgrimage.)

Age forty approximately:

Once I dreamt that Ahmad (the wealthiest village shopkeeper) was climbing a palm tree, and suddenly fell to the ground. People gathered round him and tried to revive him with 'the smell of onions and garlic'. When he recovered he said, 'I have fallen from above. But I am safe, thanks to God.'

WOMEN'S DREAMS

Age forty-five:

One day I went to the well adjacent to our clan's guest house, and found at the entrance of the guest house the man who draws the water from the well. Inside the guest house there were plants growing, such as clover and sugar cane. The man asked me to enter the guest house 'to see my father's farm'(?) When I entered I found that the northern section of the guest

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[1] This dream was just before his wife gave birth to the baby.

[2] This is also the baby's grandfather's name.

[3] According to Moslem belief, the Prophet invisibly during this night made a journey from Mecca to Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem. It is believed by the villagers that there is a certain unknown hour on this night, during which prayers are always answered.

159 house was dark with two empty water jars, while the southern side was lit and with two full water jars. I asked the man the reason for this. He told me that I was not permitted to ask such questions, but merely to look around. Then I asked him to give me some clover for my sheep as this was my father's land. He said that he could not give me anything as he was only a guardian. Then he took my water jar which I had filled and placed it in the guest house, saying, 'This water jar should not enter your house'.

Age seventy-five:

I dreamt that my father was sitting talking with 'Hag abu-Ghannam' (a pious man). The pious man's face looked dark (lit. smoky) while my father's face was bright and shining. Then the pious man asked me whether I was capable of going to see my relatives, who lived in another village, but my father said, 'No, she is not strong enough for that'.

Age thirty-five:

I dreamt that I was riding a donkey which on hearing the sound of a train threw me into the canal. In the water I found some grass tuft to which I clung. Then I discovered an iron rail leading to the bank on which I walked and so got out safely.

Age thirty-eight:

I dreamt that last year I went on pilgrimage, and saw the Prophet's tomb which has four doors, one in the east, one in the west, one in the north and one in the south. I entered the tomb from the west door while other people were looking through a window. On the north side of the Prophet's tomb there was a minaret. (The woman commented that when she told one of the pilgrims about this dream he confirmed these details, and this meant that one day God would enable her to perform this religious obligation.) [787]

Age thirty:

I was eating meat with another woman. While we were eating another girl came whom I did not know, and we gave her a portion of the meat, while we went on eating the rest. (The woman commented that meat in the dream is a sign that something good may turn up unexpectedly.) [787]

Age about forty:

One day a man came and presented me with a load of chaff and I was very pleased. (She commented that when she told her mother about it, the latter said that it might mean they would receive some money to buy their ration of sugar and some clothes. After three days her husband, who works in Alexandria, sent her two pounds.) [787]

Age thirty:

A woman neighbour was playing on the tambourine and singing with other women celebrating her son's circumcision ceremony. I filled my jar

with water to give to her as a help for the ceremony. While I was pouring 159
my jar into the water pot of her house, the women who were there started singing for me. I was frightened. (She commented that the 'tambourine' [787]
is an evil omen in the dream and indicates that something bad may happen.)

Age forty:

During the wedding ceremony of our neighbour a man gave me two coins, one for myself and the other for another woman (X). X was greedy and wanted to take the two coins. (She commented that the dream was [787]
realized, as next morning X's daughter brought forth a boy, and on the evening of the same day, she gave birth to a son.)

Appendix Twelve

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF INTELLIGENCE TESTING

THREE intelligence tests were carried out on the elementary school children in the village. They were: 1. Kabbani Primary School Intelligence Test; 2. Porteus Maze Test; 3. Alexander Pass-along Test. These tests were chosen from those available at the Institute of Education, Cairo, as representing different types of test material.[1] The first test is a verbal one, the other two are of the 'performance test' type, one being paper and pencil, while the other is practical manipulation of blocks of wood. The purpose is to test the children's ability to deal with ideas and symbols as well as their handling of concrete material and solving a practical problem.[2]

The Kabbani test, based on the Ballard Intelligence test, has been standardized on primary school children in Cairo.[3] As the test involves reading and writing it had to be confined to those boys and girls who had sufficiently mastered these skills, and this meant that it could be administered only to the children of the third grade, numbering thirty-one boys and girls.

The Porteus Maze was given to practically all the school children—127 boys and girls. Burt's modifications in administering the test were followed.[4] Only two minor changes were made: the first was that the plan of the maze was explained to the boys and girls as 'paths in a field' instead of 'paths in a garden'; and the second was that the child was asked to enter the field from the right side of the paper instead of the left, as this is more in keeping with the way of writing the Arabic script.

The Pass-along test is composed of pushing cubes of coloured wood on a board to match them with a similar pattern presented on a card. It was administered only to eighty-five boys and girls chosen from each of the three grades in alphabetical order, as the administering of this test takes a relatively longer time. 125

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[1] See Introduction.

[2] For the advisability of using a combination of verbal and performance tests see Drever and Collins, *Performance Tests of Intelligence*, Edinburgh, 1948, p. 12.

[3] I. al-Kabbani, *Primary School Intelligence Test*, Cairo, 1939 (Arabic).

[4] Cyril Burt, *Handbook of Tests*, London, 1948, pp. 98–9.

The following table represents the frequency distribution of the intelligent quotient of the thirty-one boys and girls according to their scores in the Kabbani test. 153

I.Q.	*Frequency*		
	boys	girls	total
30–39	2	4	6
40–49	1	1	2
50–59	6	3	9
60–69	3	4	7
70–79	2	4	6
80–89	1	0	1

The frequency distributions for the Porteus Maze and for the Pass-along tests are:

PORTEUS MAZE

I.Q.	*Frequency*		
	boys	girls	total
30–39	1	0	1
40–49	0	0	0
50–59	3	6	9
60–69	10	19	29
70–79	14	21	35
80–89	16	12	28
90–99	7	2	9
100–109	10	1	11
110–119	1	2	3
120–129	1	0	1
130–139	1	0	1

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PASS-ALONG

I.Q.	*Frequency*		
	boys	girls	total
30–39	1	3	4
40–49	0	1	1
50–59	0	2	2
60–69	0	8	8
70–79	3	8	11
80–89	1	9	10
90–99	11	2	13
100–109	11	10	21
110–119	8	3	11
120–129	2	1	3
130–139	1	0	1

For the results of test I the following remarks may be made concerning the interpretive significance of its scores.

1. As far as this small group of thirty-one boys and girls (with an average chronological age of eleven years eight months for boys, and eleven years four months for girls) is concerned, the results fall below the average norm of intelligence compared with urban children on whom the test was standardized.

2. The distribution in the sample, however, roughly follows the normal distribution.

3. Comparing boys and girls, the latter tend to have slightly higher scores on the whole than the boys.

For the results of tests II and III one notes that:

1. Unless the sample of test I happens to be of low intelligence (an assumption for which there is no apparent justification except the small number) tests II and III appear to be better tests than test I. In these tests children, including the sample in test I, have scored average and even superior I.Q.s. In test III, especially in the case of boys, the curve shows a skew towards the superior I.Q. tendency.

3. Boys on the whole have better scores in these performance tests than girls. In the Porteus Maze test only three girls out of sixty-three are above the average (100), while thirteen boys out of sixty-four fall above the average. In the Pass-along test the area representing boys of average or above average I.Q. is larger than that of the girls.

[732] [828] It is to be noted here that one of the boys who is mentally deficient and could not handle the test problems of the performance tests at all, is called 'Shaikh' (saint) by the rest of the school children. Among the adults there

Among the adults there are in the village four people who may be considered by psychologists as insane or mentally deficient but are regarded as possessing a 'saintly touch'. However, the use of these three types of intelligence tests tends to indicate, apart from the difficulty of sampling, that the children have an intelligence of the practical type. The nature of the performance tests is perhaps nearer to the problems of their serious activities of everyday life. On the whole they scored better in Pass-along than Porteus. 153 [934] [928] [155]

It is worth mentioning that some of the children who came out well in the performance tests did very badly with the verbal test, and this could be attributed to the unfamiliarity of the children with the intellectual items of the latter. Apart from the mathematical items, this unfamiliarity could be demonstrated by item 8, Section 1. In it, the child is asked: 'If you want to give your mother a present what will you choose: a skipping rope, a toy, a silk stocking or a bicycle?' Although the obvious answer according to the test is 'silk stocking', which some children gave, others gave 'a skipping rope' or 'a bicycle' while none chose a toy. On asking a boy why he chose a bicycle, he answered that after giving it to his mother he would take it back for himself. Some of those who chose the rope thought that it was a useful thing for mother as she 'would hang the washing on it'. The difference of value-attitudes implied in such items and their influence on answers given, is similar to that classical example given by Klineberg with regard to one of the items of the 'National Intelligence Test' which was administered to some children of an Indian tribe. In this item the subject is presented with the words: crowd, closeness, danger, dust, excitement, number, and is asked to underline only two words which are the necessary characteristics of the crowd. Although 'closeness and number' are the correct answers according to the key of the test, yet many of the Indian children underlined danger and dust and in other cases excitement. According to their own logic and experience these answers seem to be the right ones.[1]

In our case the results of testing by a verbal test brings out the validity of applying tests standardized for urban children to rural children. By no means all the children who took the Kabbani test are mentally deficient, but the test itself is overweighted with items that are more suitable to city children, and may fail to sample adequately those abilities in which the rural children excel. In the United States and Britain studies of urban-rural differences in intelligence have revealed that rural children are neither uniformly nor consistently inferior to urban children on all tests.[2] Our small-scale testing tends to confirm the conclusion that while rural children score low in tests of abstract intelligence, they may excel in tests of the mechanical or practical type.

Although doubts could be cast on the quantitative results of tests that are not standardized for a particular community, such tests could be used

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[1] Otto Klineberg, *Race and Psychology*, Unesco, Paris, 1951, p. 11.

[2] A. Anastasi and J. Foley, *Differential Psychology*, New York, 1949, pp. 823–7.

153 as instruments of differential qualitative analysis. Nadel expressed the view that intelligence tests 'in their specific adjustment to cultural groups would already reflect specific qualitative factors of culture, and culturally determined forms of intelligence'. Such an approach would not be so much concerned with assessing degrees of intelligence, as 'analysing types and qualities of intelligence'.[1] The concrete, matter-of-fact orientation of children's intelligence in Ṣilwa did not only exhibit itself in the relatively better performance in the Pass-along test, but was also revealed in the ease in which their attention was engaged in the performance tests compared with the verbal one. Moreover, in the case of performance tests some boys and girls after getting stuck at some point in the testing asked me whether they could bring an older boy or girl who could help them or who could 'solve it better for me'. This attitude seems to be a reflection of the cultural pattern in which an older person is supposed to know better and hence should be consulted. [56]

It has become increasingly evident that experience in different cultures and even different socio-economic groups in one culture, may lead to basically different perceptual responses and lend different meanings to a similar test situation. Moreover, one cannot ignore the importance of cultural motivation in assessing test results and interpreting numbers and scores.

Japanese children have been found to excel American children significantly in tests involving sustained attention, visual perception or spatial orientation, while falling behind on verbal and arithmetic tests. It is also reported that Chinese groups excelled the Japanese in the Binet type of tests and in auditory memory span, while they scored lower in the Porteus Maze and in all performance and mechanical aptitude tests.[2]

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[1] S. F. Nadel, 'The Application of Intelligence Tests in the Anthropological Field', in *The Study of Society*, p. 197.

[2] Anastasi and Foley, op. cit., pp. 739–40. For the effect of cultural values on intelligence and other psychological tests, see Klineberg, op. cit. See also M. Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, where she mentions that the aesthetic interest of children in Samoa overshadowed the task of solving the test problems.

Appendix Thirteen

REMARKS ON THE RORSCHACH TESTING

The Rorschach ink-blots test was administered to male adults, and to some of the school boys and girls, twenty subjects from each group. The test was administered at the writer's home, always after a friendly chat with the subject. With the first few tests on the school children, it was found that the children attempted to give responses in 'classical Arabic', but this difficulty was soon got over when the children were told that the task had nothing to do with the school. The original idea was to give these records to a Rorschach expert in Egypt, but unfortunately he was prevented by illness from undertaking the task of interpretation. Consequently, the writer took a three-term course on the technique at the Tavistock Clinic, Institute of Human Relations. Thus any failure to give a full account of the results of testing can be attributed to his lack of sufficient experience. The method of scoring and interpretation is mainly based on that of Rorschach himself and also that of Mons.[1] 159 [125]

The interpretation of children's records is not attempted here, but the interpretive significance of the adults' records is given.

The first striking fact about the records is that none of the twenty subjects rejected any of the cards during their performance. The average number of responses totalled twenty-five (the average responses for a sufficiently productive person according to the experience of Rorschach experts is twenty to thirty). Thus from the quantity of their responses one is inclined to infer that the members of this group show on the whole a capacity for productivity and persistence. They try to do their best in performing a task, and do not give up easily.

The proportion between 'whole responses—W' and 'detail responses—D and d' is 14 per cent and 86 per cent respectively. This suggests a tendency to view situations in a practical and concrete manner. In other words the members of the group in their intellectual approach are more concerned with realistic situations than with abstract concepts. Moreover, their pronounced interest in minor details (d and Dd) suggests a tendency

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[1] B. Klopfer and D. Kelley, *The Rorschach Technique*. W. Mons, *Principles and Practice of the Rorschach Personality Test*, London, 1950.

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954

MR13 Fellahin MR13

Silwa

159 towards fussiness. Many of the subjects repeated the same responses in different cards or in the same card. From this one may venture to conclude that they are rather obsessional in their habits and tend to tackle their problems at random. Furthermore the proportion of wholes to human movement (W : M) being 4 : 1 suggests that their mental output is mostly reproductions of other people's ideas accepted without critical thinking.

The very high percentage of 'pure form F' responses, amounting to 82 per cent, leaves one without doubt, according to Rorschach principles, that these people are very rigid in their outlook and approach towards life (the reasonable intellectual control is represented by 50 per cent F responses).

This rigid intellectual control and desire for conformity is also confirmed from the records by very low frequency of human movement responses (M). The percentage of M responses is 4·5; and out of twenty persons fourteen persons gave no M response at all. The quality of the few M's given is not vigorous or lively on the whole. All this suggests that these villagers have great resistance against revealing their fantasy life which is kept under control by their caution and their preference for a more conventional and restricted mode of expression (F%). Their fantasies are to a great degree inhibited and they make little use of their creative imagination.

With regard to colour (C), only four did not give any colour responses. When the proportion of M to C is examined (1 : 3·5) one can state that these people are on the whole extratensive, and more readily responsive in their emotional reactions to the external world. Their emotional life tends to find its main outlet more in outer reactions, conventional procedures rather than in mature fantasy or introspection. In ten cases there is a balanced outer maturity, judging by the almost equal number of FC and CF, while in the remaining records there is a definite tendency towards impulsiveness and lack of maturity, shown by preponderance of CF over FC.

These are some of the striking observations on the interpretive significance of the Rorschach records of this group, showing some of the basic traits of the personality structure in this group.[1] The small sample, however, would not allow for unreserved generalization. Moreover, the individual differences are quite apparent from the different responses in the group. The following are samples of the Rorschach responses:

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[1] The interpretation of these records is by no means complete; it lacks for instance analysis of content and quality of organisation. I have tried, however, to follow Rorschach experiments in the study of culture-personality approach. See E. Oberholzer, 'Rorschach's Experiment and the Alorese', in *The People of Alor*, by Cora du Bois, Chapter XXII. Theodora M. Abel and Renata A. Calabresi, Chapter XIII in *Life in a Mexican Village*, by O. Lewis. Leighton and Kluckhohn, *The Children of the People*.

APPENDIX XIII

SAMPLES OF MEN'S RECORDS

Mahmoud—informant.

Card No.	*Performance*[1]
I	dog
	woman
2 minutes	cow
	man
	buffalo
	boy
	young girl
II	big woman
	virgin girl
4 minutes	calf
	dog with open mouth
	ram
III	cock
	monkey
4 minutes	fish
	fish
	man
	another man
	mouse
	rabbit
	duck
	cock
IV	elephant
	bird
4 minutes	lion
	dog
	train smoke-stack
V	woman
	tongues
3 minutes	two people arguing
	crocodile
	man
	crocodile with wide mouth
VI	bird
	constable
2 minutes	old man
	bull
	cow

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[1] Enquiry omitted.

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Card No.	*Performance*
VII	camel
	woman
3 minutes	rabbit
	ewe
VIII	flag
	ewe
5 minutes	ewe
	man
	man holding the ewe by its leg
IX	man wearing his turban
	man riding his horse
3 minutes	donkey
	ewe
X	poisonous snake
	woman
5 minutes	another snake with its mouth open and tail curled
	scorpion
	mouse
	rabbit
	table with a bottle on it
	scorpion
	a sleeping woman

Ali—informant (30 years).

I 1 minute	middle part looks like 'sea scorpion', outer parts wings
II 3 minutes	the red parts look like two mice, dark parts like wolves or crows, lower red part butterflies
III 3 minutes	a human skeleton, with a stomach attached to it, the red part like two lungs—opening of anus with faeces emerging
IV 2 minutes	an animal which I don't know, and has two eyes and two horns, the whole thing may be some sort of decoration
V 1 minute	a bat, with two ears, two legs and two wings
VI 30 seconds	something decorated

APPENDIX XIII

Card No.	*Performance*
VII	two people facing each other, putting a hand behind back,
1 minute	and lifting the other
VIII	monkeys on a hill, or perhaps a tent with a pole in the
1 minute	middle
IX	two animals, with a pole in the middle
1 minute	
X	two people falling on their heads from the top pole
	lion
7 minutes	rabbit's head
	like the inner parts of the body, throat and lungs
	yellow flower bud

Man—fifty years old.

I	a bat
	vine leaves
2 minutes	a black insect
	frog
II	rabbit
	pencil
1½ minutes	the leg of a pigeon
III	a picture of a man
	human heart
1 minute	gall bladder
	hands
IV	looks like a huge rock with pipes hanging down
1 minute	human legs
V	mouse
	sparrow's feet
1 minute	sparrow's wings
VI	statue
	pole on which statue stands
1½ minutes	bird's claws
VII	bird
	camel
1½ minutes	tree leaves or stones

APPENDIX XIII

Card No.	*Performance*
VIII	a picture of a monkey
	tree from which monkeys are hanging
1 minute	roots of the trees
IX	perforated tree leaves
1 minute	red tomatoes
X	smoke-stack
	an entrance door
5 minutes	picture of a bird
	scorpion
	frame of a picture
	(this is the strangest card)

SAMPLES OF CHILDREN'S RECORDS

Card No.	*Performance*
Boy—10½ years old.	
I	two men clapping with their hands
	two mountains
1 minute	mosque
	dome
II	plants
	roses (red)
4 minutes	pigeon
	head of a cock
III	two cocks
	foot of a man
3 minutes	cock
	frog
IV	man
30 seconds	
V	kite flying
30 seconds	
VI	camel
30 seconds	
VII	

APPENDIX XIII

Card No.	*Performance*
VIII	dome
	cat
1 minute	water jar
IX	tree
1 minute	vine leaf (green)
X	mouse
1 minute	woman
Boy—fourteen years old	
I	Jinn (ghost—black) with its two eyes, mouth, horns and
2 minutes	feet
II	mosque
	blood (red)
2 minutes	dogs with ears
	open space
	ears
	mouth of a dog
III	like ghosts
	blood (red)
2 minutes	necks of ghosts
	their feet
IV	mountain and clouds over it (black)
1 minute	stones
V	wasp (black with feathers)
1½ minutes	these are its wings and legs.
VI	statue
1 minute	black garment
VII	devils with horns. These are its tails, and they are sitting
1½ minutes	in a dark place
VIII	dome
	lion
1 minute	red soil
IX	fire (red and yellow)
1 minute	firewood

APPENDIX XIII

Card No.	*Performance*
X	like a garden
	lion
5 minutes	deer
	face of a donkey
	fallen plants (scattered green)
	wood
	camels

Girl—ten years old.

I	camel
	kite
1½ minutes	crow
II	two monkeys, these are their legs and they are putting their hands on each other
1 minute	
III	a man, another man
	rose
1½ minutes	hands of the men, their feet
IV	wasp, these are its wings
30 minutes	
V	wasp, these are its feet and this is its mouth
1 minute	
VI	mosque, these are its walls, its stairs and its dome
1 minute	
VII	hill, stones
30 seconds	
VIII	mice
	hell (red)
1 minute	Paradise (green)
IX	monkeys, sitting on stones and hitting each other
30 seconds	
X	a man riding a donkey
	deer
2 minutes	pigeon
	cock, hen, rabbit, cock, hen

APPENDIX XIII

Card No.	*Performance*
Girl—twelve years old.	
I	a tree with some people sitting on the top of it
	stones
3 minutes	bird
	duck
II	men putting their hands on each other, and wearing caps on their heads, facing each other
3 minutes	
III	monkeys with a red nose, the monkeys are sitting with their hands and legs cut off
3 minutes	a man putting his hand on his waist
IV	a lion sitting with a small head
1 minute	
V	a wasp on the ground with its wings and ears
2 minutes	
VI	a corn mill, people pouring seeds into the mill
1 minute	
VII	small fish in the water
30 seconds	
VIII	a cat on the tree and eating from it
30 seconds	
IX	people praying in the mosque
30 seconds	
X	water wheel with its pole
	donkey
3 minutes	owl
	butterfly

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